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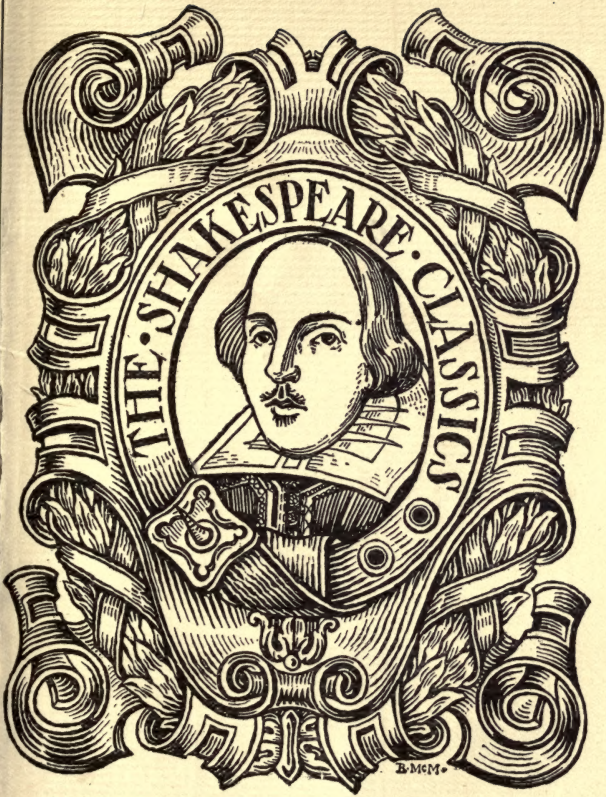
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KING LEIR

THE CHRONICLE HISTORY OF KING LEIR: THE ORIGINAL OF SHAKESPEARE'S 'KING LEAR': EDITED BY SIDNEY LEE, LITT.D.

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INTRODUCTION

First production of the piece in 1594. The British legend, of which King Lear is the hero, was first turned to purposes of drama in the spring of 1594. On 6 April of that year and, again, two days later Philip Henslowe, the theatrical manager, notes in his *Diary* that a piece, which he calls *Kinge Leare*, was acted at the Rose Theatre in London 'by the Queene's men and my Lord of Susexe together.' Two distinguished companies of the day were acting in combination—the one company being under the patronage of Queen Elizabeth herself, and the other under the patronage of one of the Queen's leading courtiers, the Earl of Sussex. From the first performance Henslowe derived the fairly substantial sum of 38*s.*, and from the second that of 26*s.*[1]

In succeeding entries on the same page of his *Diary* Henslowe mentions the production (all in the following June) of three plays whose titles also strike a Shakespearean

[1] Henslowe's *Diary*, *ed.* Greg. 1904, pt. 1. p. 17. Henslowe by an obvious slip of the pen gives the year of the first entry 1593 instead of 1594. It is probable that the piece was written originally for the Queen's company, and was first performed by that company before its temporary junction with the Earl of Sussex's men.

note, viz.: *Andronicous*, *Hamlet*, and *The Tamynge of A Shrowe*.

Andronicous is doubtless the sanguinary tragedy which was first published in 1594, and is included in all editions of Shakespeare's works. *Hamlet* and *The Tamynge of A Shrowe* are early dramatic versions of popular stories, on which Shakespeare brought his mighty faculty to bear at a subsequent date. Henslowe's play of *Hamlet* is not extant. The play of *The Tamynge of A Shrowe* was, like *Titus Andronicus*, printed and published in 1594, the year of its production by Henslowe

The same significance which belongs to Henslowe's contemporary venture of *The Tamynge of A Shrowe*, attaches to his *Kinge Leare*. Henslowe's *Kinge Leare* laid the foundation on which Shakespeare built a dozen years later the stupendous tragedy which is known by the same title. The play of 1594 was the clay out of which Shakespeare fashioned the most poignant of all his triumphs in tragic art.

Publishing license of 1594. Some mystery envelops the history of the publication of the pre-Shakespearean drama of *King Leir*. On May 14, 1594, a month after Henslowe produced the piece at the Rose Theatre, Edward White, a London stationer and bookseller, obtained a license from the Stationers' Company to publish 'a booke entituled *The moste famous Chronicle historye of Leire, kinge of England, and his Three Daughters*.'[1] There is no reason to doubt that

[1] Arber, Stationers' Register, II. 649.

the play to which Henslowe's *Diary* refers was the 'booke' which Edward White received this license to publish. But no publication of *King Leir* corresponding with the date of the license of May 14, 1594, has come to light. There is a remote chance that the book was published in a small edition, every copy of which has disappeared. We know that the play of *Titus Andronicus*, which Henslowe produced in the same year, was, after due entry in the Stationers' Register, published by Edward White, the licensee of *King Leir* (in partnership with another stationer) during the eventful year 1594. All original copies of this first edition of *Titus* vanished from sight until 1905, when a single exemplar was discovered in Sweden. The elusive problem of Edward White's dealings with *King Leir* may ultimately be solved by a revelation of like kind. At present there is no tangible proof that his license of May 14, 1594, materialised in the shape of a book.[1]

[1] It is worth noting that on the same day that White received his license for *King Leir* he obtained permission to publish four other plays, viz.: *The Historye of ffryer Bacon and ffryer Boungaye; the famous historye of John of Gaunte sonne to Kinge Edward the Third with his Conquest of Spaine and marriage of his Twoo daughters to the Kinges of Castile and Portugale, &c.*; *the booke of David and Bethsaba*; and *a pastorall plesant Commedie of Robin Hood and Little John, &c.* Of these four pieces only one is extant in an edition of 1594, viz.: *the History of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, which was by Robert Greene, and is described on the title page as having been 'plaid by her maiesties servants.' Of *David and Bethsaba*, which was by George Peele, the earliest edition now known was published not by Edward White but by Adam Islip five years later, in 1599. No copies of *Robin Hooa* or of *John of Gaunt* are known

The publication of 1605. On May 18, 1605, after the lapse of some eleven years, *King Leir* reappeared in the pages of the Stationers' Company's Register as the title of a projected publication. A stationer and printer named Simon Stafford then obtained a new license to publish 'A booke called *The Tragecall Historie of Kinge Leir and his Three Daughters, &c.*, as it was lately acted.'

To the new license a note of somewhat unusual character was appended. It ran to the effect that Stafford, the licensee, assigned on certain conditions his right in the 'copy' to a bookseller named John Wright. The company authorised Wright to publish, in place of Stafford, '*The Tragicall History of kinge Leire and his Three Daughters*, provided that Simon Stafford shall have the printinge of this booke.'[1] The license in this qualified shape took effect. Stafford quickly printed a volume, which was duly published by Wright, with this title: *The True Chronicle History of King Leir, and his three daughters Gonorill, Ragan and Cordella, as it hath bene divers and sundry times lately acted.* That work is reprinted in this volume.

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to have come from the press at any time. *The Conquest of Spain by John of Gaunt* is mentioned by Henslowe early in 1601 as a joint production of William Rankins and Richard Hathway. For a careful analysis of the accessible information respecting the publication of the old play of *King Leir*, see a paper on *The Date of King Lear* by Robert Adger Law, in the Publications of the Modern Language Association of America, vol. xxi.

[1] Arber, Stationers' Register, III. 289.

Original copies and reprints. The volume is rare; only three copies are now known, and one of these is imperfect. The two perfect copies are respectively in the British Museum (Press Mark 161 a 51), and in the library of Mr. A. H. Huth. The former of these is slightly cropped. The imperfect copy is also in the British Museum (Press Mark C 34 l 11); two leaves, C_2 and C_8, are missing from the volume, and are supplied in manuscript.

The original edition has been thrice reprinted already: for the first time in 1779 by George Steevens in his 'Six Old Plays,' vol. ii. pp. 377-464; again in 1875 by Mr. W. C. Hazlitt in his revised edition of J. P. Collier's 'Shakespeare's Library: a collection of the Romances, Novels, Poems and Histories, used by Shakespeare as the foundation of his dramas,' vol. vi. pp. 305-387; and, lastly, in 1907 by the Malone Society. Steevens reprints the text with great care, although he is not immaculate. Mr. Hazlitt's edition is defaced by numerous typographical errors. The Malone Society's reprint, which was prepared by the Society's general editor Mr. W. W. Greg and was checked by Mr. R. Warwick Bond, satisfied every requirement of accuracy.

The stage directions. The statement on the title page of the 1605 edition that the piece 'hath been divers and sundry times lately acted' is amply confirmed by the abundance of stage directions scattered through the text. The printer clearly worked on a manuscript prepared for theatrical

uses. The numerous stage directions possess an interest of their own. They illustrate the mode in which the tragedy was represented in the Elizabethan theatre. Though scenery was absent, there was no lack of properties, of appropriate costume, or of suitable musical accompaniments. A table spread with food and drink, pots of ale, riding wands, books, purses, a basket, bags of money, swords and daggers, are all specifically noted as implements requisite to the action. The Gallian King and his companions twice adopt disguises, in the first case appearing in the habiliments of pilgrims, and in the second in the dress of 'country folk.' The Kings of Cornwall and Cambria make their entry in one scene, 'booted and spurred,' and elsewhere cast lots with dice. Mariners are described as wearing 'sea-gowns' and 'sea-caps.' Appropriate illustrations by means of sound are likewise enjoined. Claps of thunder accentuate the perils of King Leir's wanderings. In the concluding scenes drums and trumpets are frequently bidden accompany the incidents of battle. 'A still (*i. e.* softly played) march' shows that modulation was observed in the execution. Mingled notes of drums and trumpets bring the play to a close. The gestures of the actors are also defined and hints given as to their facial expression. The characters are bidden 'start' or 'frown,' now they whisper together, now show signs of faintness. They sleep and wake and reel. In the fight they chase one another 'to the door' at the back of the stage.

But in spite of the amplitude of the stage directions other

apparatus which is necessary to make the progress of the representation quite clear to the reader is wanting in the original edition. Save for the appearance of the words Actus I. on the opening page, the original text is without scenic divisions, and lacks a list of *Dramatis Personæ* or any specific mention of the 'scenes' of the action. A list of characters in order of entrance was, with scenic divisions, first supplied in the Malone Society's reprint. In the present edition, divisions into Acts and indications of the various 'scenes' of the action are given for the first time as well.

The full stage directions, with their precise notes of the entries and exits of the actors, clearly suggest the beginning and ending of each successive scene. The intended limits of the Acts can only be conjectured; they appear to be of irregular lengths. There is less difficulty with the scenic descriptions. The speeches throughout plainly suggest the various places in which the episodes unfold themselves.

The history of the 1605 edition. There is little question that the present play of *King Leir*, which was published in 1605, was identical with the work which was produced by Henslowe at the Rose Theatre, and was licensed for publication by Edward White in 1594.[1]

[1] A difference in the titles of the two pieces as recorded in the two licenses of the Stationers' Company cannot be overlooked. The earlier entry describes the piece as 'the *most famous chronicle* history.' The second entry changes the designation into 'the *tragical* history.' The temper of the drama of 1605 may well be termed 'tragical' in spite of the happy ending. But the mis-description, such as it was,

Internal evidence clearly points to the earlier year as the period of composition. A like conclusion is strongly supported externally by the personal relations which subsisted between John Wright, the publisher of 1605, and Edward White, the licensee of 1594. Wright was White's apprentice from 1594 to 1602. *King Leir* was the first publication which he undertook, after he had acquired, under White's auspices, his freedom of the Company (June 28, 1602). Wright's issue of *King Leir* in 1605 was doubtless the fruit of some friendly negotiation with his old master.[1] Nor was White's legal interest in the play of *King Leir* extinguished by Wright's action. The copyright descended to White's heir, and on the death of his son in 1624, it became the property of the son's widow.[2]

First Publication of Shakespeare's Lear.—Some additional bibliographical data are necessary to the full understanding of the place that the old play fills in the realm of

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was corrected on the printed title-page, and lends no colour to the inference that the two entries in the Stationers' Register relate to two distinct works.

[1] John Wright, who was a bookseller only (not a printer), mainly dealt in chapbooks and ballads, but he undertook the sale of half of Thorpe's famous edition of Shakespeare's *Sonnets* in 1609, and in 1611 a reprint of Marlowe's *Faustus*.

[2] In 1624 the younger White's widow made over the copyright of *King Leir* to another stationer named Aldee. When Aldee's widow died in 1640, the copyright passed to her son-in-law, Oulton. That the line of descent is traceable through so long a period, is evidence that some pecuniary value was thought to attach to the copyright for more than half a century.

Shakespearean study. Shakespeare's great tragedy of *King Lear* was acted at court on the day after Christmas in 1606 —the year following Wright's publication of the old piece. Shakespeare in all probability penned his own play within a few months of its presentation at Whitehall. Eleven months after that event, on November 22, 1607, two stationers, Nathaniel Butter and John Busby, obtained a license to publish 'a booke called Master William Shakespeare, his history of King Lear.' Shakespeare's work was first published in 1608. Thus the old play in the extant edition of 1605 was on sale in the bookshops nearly three years before Shakespeare's dramatic version of the legend was at the disposal of the reading public.

General characteristics. The uses which Shakespeare made of the old play constitute its supreme title to study. At the same time both choice and treatment of topic give the piece some genuine interest from the point of view of the literary historian. The choice of subject illustrates the strength of contemporary enthusiasm for national legend. The treatment shows how a modicum of ingenuity and dramatic faculty or instinct might, in an era of unusual intellectual and spiritual alertness, infuse human interest and pathos into the bare improbabilities of legendary narrative. New characters and incident vivify the old record with a liberal and often surprising originality. Yet in the more artistic or æsthetic aspect the work remains an elementary essay in the dramatic art. The dim intuitions of character

are without subtlety. The verse is manipulated with a cold correctness. The language is rarely touched by poetic emotion, though its simplicity leaves little room for false sentiment or bombast.[1] There are farcical interludes in prose which owe their ludicrous effect to their crudity, and occasionally to their childish obscenity. Apart from its Shakespearean associations, the drama only deserves attention as a specimen of the humble average fare which commended itself to the Elizabethan playgoer. On its own merits, it is an undistinguished unit in that pedestrian category of dramatic endeavour which found in the Elizabethan playhouse singularly warm welcome, even during the active careers of the Elizabethan giants of drama.

Theories of authorship. There is no clue to the author's name. The play was published anonymously. External evidence is wanting, and internal evidence gives no clear guidance. It has long been the fantastic habit of Elizabethan critics to hang the heavy load of most of the anonymous Elizabethan drama round the necks of Marlowe, Lodge, Kyd, Peele and Greene. Signs of the workmanship of one or other of these five writers have been accordingly

[1] The writer's grammar is at times open to exception. The frequent employment of the singular verb with a plural subject (see II. iv. 104 note) is no uncommon Elizabethan usage, but the habit suggests rusticity when it is found (as in this play) conjoined with the occasional appearance of a plural verb with a singular subject (see I. ii. 54), and of such solecisms as the plural possessive pronoun 'their' in substitution for the singular 'his' (I. iii. 90–1, and IV. vii. 53).

detected in the piece before us. The argument of identification rests in this, as in other cases, on more or less arbitrary assumptions. It is based on occasional resemblances between this play and the acknowledged work of one or other of these five men in small details of construction, expression, or versification. Marlowe's genius entitles him to a better fate. It is fatuous to associate his name with an effort which at no point rises to any fulness of poetic utterance. The characteristic merits of Lodge, Kyd, Peele or Greene are far inferior to those of Marlowe. They walk on the lower slopes of the Elizabethan Parnassus. Their dramatic work, although at times warmed by bursts of passionate fervour, lacks for the most part indubitable marks of exalted individuality. Method, thought, metre and language take through their plays the impression of a common mould cut in low relief, and the present play, like many in the massive crowd of anonymous pieces of the period, is of that widely distributed average type. The strong family likeness which characterizes the inferior Elizabethan drama of both known and unknown workmanship imperils almost all deductions of identical authorship from purely internal evidence. The presence of a very extended series of definite coincidences of style can alone give weight to such inferences. No such coincidences are discernible between the old play of *Leir* and dramatic experiments whose authors' names are established. Scattered and disjointed analogies offer insubstantial testimony. They are no more than common labels of dramatic hack-

work, which literary aspirants of limited ability produced in rare abundance during the last decade of Elizabeth's reign.

It seems, moreover, hardly rational to seek the anonymous author of *King Leir* among writers in whose publications anonymity was habitually eschewed. When in 1594 White obtained a license for the publication of *King Leir* he secured a like privilege in regard to two other plays, one by Peele and one by Greene, both of which were issued with due announcement of their authorship. Nor was it the wont of Kyd and Lodge, or of their publishers, to shroud in complete anonymity their literary activities. Were Greene or Peele, Kyd or Lodge responsible for *King Leir*, the publisher is not likely to have proved false to his habitual practice, and to have withheld all key to the dramatist's name from the title-page. The absence of the author's name, or of his initials, suggests that he never emerged from a position of obscurity; and that whether or no he wrote more plays than this one, he never acquired genuine fame by any.

Leir and Locrine. The author may with greatest probability be sought among those shadowy figures who dealt with similar themes. The story of *King Leir* belongs to that dark age in the legendary history of Britain which preceded the Roman conquest. The mythic era supplied the fable of *Gorboduc* to the earliest Elizabethan tragedy, and the whole family of legends achieved peculiar popularity on the Elizabethan stage during the last decade of the sixteenth century. Possibly the author of *King Leir* may be responsible

for one or two of the cognate efforts of mysterious origin which gloomily distinguished that period.

Of these efforts the most interesting on both internal and external grounds is *The lamentable tragedie of Locrine*. Locrine was a British prince, who was Lear's legendary ancestor, and the tragedy concerning his career was published in 1595, a year after *King Leir* was produced in the theatre and was first licensed for publication. Apart from likeness of subject matter, the metrical monotony of the verse, the crude interludes of farce in prose, the tone of many classical and scriptural allusions, and occasional poetic patches on the tame canvas, give a vague colour to the theory that *King Leir* was a first attempt in drama by the author of *Locrine*. Both dramatists sought their material in the same repository of fable, which Geoffrey of Monmouth had brought into being. There is no large difference in the dramatic temper of the two pieces, and such distinctions as may be drawn may illustrate a familiar law of growth in literary art. The later piece is less constrained, is more expansive and passionate than the earlier. But the increase of power and passion may be the outcome of added experience. Unluckily the speculation cannot yield very solid fruit, for the authorship of *Locrine* is shrouded in an impenetrable mist. The title-page assigns it to 'W.S.,' initials which were clearly invented by the publisher to give the unwary reader the false impression that the play came from Shakespeare's pen; plausible grounds have, in conformity with the inevitable custom, been advanced in favour

of Greene's responsibility for *Locrine*, but all are of questionable validity.

William Rankins. Another dramatic worker in the same legendary field who claims mention in this context is historically in a situation which curiously reverses that of the unknown author of *Locrine*. In 1598, Henslowe, the theatrical manager, produced a piece called after one of Lear's most famous successors on the mythical throne of Britain, Malmutius Donwallow. This legendary personage is reckoned to have brought to a close the internecine strife of Ferrex and Porrex, and to have inaugurated a new era of peace and law. The Elizabethan drama, of which Malmutius was the hero, has—less fortunate than *Locrine*—been lost. Yet, by way of tantalising compensation, the dramatist's name has escaped the oblivion which has overtaken the author of *Locrine*. Henslowe declares that the writer of *Malmutius Donwallow* was William Ranckenes (*i. e.* Rankins). Rankins was sole or part author, according to Henslowe's record, of three other historical plays between the end of 1598 and the beginning of 1601. Like *Malmutius*, all have vanished. In the absence of any specimen of Rankins' dramatic work, his dramatic powers can only be dimly guessed from some extant satires of more vigour than grace, and from a little occasional verse of bald simplicity. He was clearly a humble practitioner in letters, but his capacity need not have proved unequal to the task of dramatising the fables of Lear (in 1594), and even of Locrine (in 1595), as well as the

mythical career of their descendant Malmutius Donwallow (in 1598). The suggestion is at any rate worth parenthetic notice. It should be added that Rankins and a friend in the same literary category as himself, Richard Hathway, were joint authors of that lost piece about John of Gaunt's Conquest of Spain, which was licensed to Edward White, for publication, at the same date in 1594 as *King Leir*, and that this historic drama was undergoing revision by the two authors, at Henslowe's expense, early in 1601. Rankins was at any rate an active figure in the theatrical arena while the dramatic possibilities of the old story of King Lear were first brought to the notice of the Elizabethan public.

The Legend of Geoffrey of Monmouth. The fable of an aged father who divides his property among his three daughters in reward for their profession of love, and then suffers a cruel disillusionment from a misinterpretation of their assurances, is a folk-story of great antiquity and wide distribution. Its absorption by the legendary history of Britain can be traced to no earlier source than Geoffrey of Monmouth's twelfth-century chronicle, a massive monument of stubborn credulity. In Geoffrey's Latin history of British Kings, King Lear and his daughters hold a central place. Geoffrey claims to translate British records of immemorial antiquity, but the alleged fountain of his stream of incredible information need not detain us here. It is sufficient for our present purpose to know that from the twelfth to the seventeenth centuries Geoffrey's fables of Lear and his line

were accepted as authentic history, and were in continuous process of recapitulation, even to the date of Milton's death in 1674, by a succession of chroniclers and historians who enjoyed general repute.

Lear and Brute. Geoffrey is responsible for the strange allegation, which very long and obstinately held its ground, that Britain owed its name and the birth of its civilisation to one Brute, an imaginary grandson of Aeneas of Troy, who settled with a band of followers in the island more than 2000 years before the Christian era. Brute is credited with founding London under the name of Troia Nova or Troynovant, and with begetting a long line of British Kings. His son Locrine was followed in the eighth generation by Lear (son of Bladud), on whose career Geoffrey grafted the folk-tale of the three daughters. Lear's royal progeny is carried by Geoffrey through six or seven further generations until its extinction amid the fatal strife of King Gorboduc's sons, Ferrex and Porrex. With the deaths of these fierce warriors, a new dynasty of the same Trojan strain was inaugurated by Malmutius Donwallow, son of Cloten, Duke of Cornwall, a lawgiver after the pattern of Numa Pompilius of Rome. Malmutius' descendants supplied the throne of Britain with brave occupants for ten or more centuries. His line, which included King Lud, the renovator of London, survived the Roman occupation and became feudatory to the Roman Empire. Cymbeline, who was reckoned to be coeval with the opening of the Christian era, was Donwallow's distant

heir. Only with the invasion of the Jutes under Hengist and Horsa, and the ending of the British dynasty on the passing away of King Arthur, did the dominion initiated by Brute and his Trojan companions pass altogether to another race. To Geoffrey's story of the ancient and long-lived dynasty, Shakespeare owed more or less directly two of his heroes—Cymbeline as well as Lear.

Lear and the Elizabethan historians. Geoffrey's legend was retold by more than fifty writers, chroniclers, historians and poets—before the production of the old play concerning the Brito-Trojan King Leir. Layamon at the end of the twelfth century first turned the tradition into English in his poem called *Brut*. In the sixteenth century Lear's tale found its appointed place in the preliminary sections of English chronicles by Fabyan, Grafton, Stow and Holinshed, and was, with its setting, very slowly dislodged from credible history. With the notable exceptions of Camden and Speed the chief archæologists of Shakespeare's day viewed all the details of the Trojan myth as articles of orthodox belief. Robert Greene, whose varied writings reflect with fidelity contemporary culture, seriously described in 1590 on the authority of 'the antiquaries' the city of London as 'that famous Troynovant, plotted and erected by Brute, and after famozed by King Lud and his successors.'[1] Even Milton declined to reject altogether the Trojan pedigree of the

[1] Greene's *The Royal Exchange* 1590, in Prose Works, ed. Grosart, vol. vii. p. 222.

British crown. Scepticism, which found an occasional voice, was rejected as unpatriotic. Queen Elizabeth was many times saluted with the utmost gravity by literary admirers as a worthy representative of that ancient house of Troy, of which Lear, like Brute, Locrine, Bladud and Lud, was a shining ornament. Poets under James I repeatedly called the chief city of the kingdom, 'Troynovant' or 'New Troy.' Thomas Dekker entitled the pageant, which he devised for the entry into office of the Lord Mayor of London in 1612, '*Troia-Noua Triumphans*, London Triumphing.' [1]

[1] During Henry VIII's reign Polydore Vergil denied the existence of Brute and his family, and denounced as a credulous invention the whole pedigree of British Kings. Polydore had early disciples, nearly all of whom were of foreign or Scottish origin, and their scepticism was assigned to racial envy. The Scottish historian and poet George Buchanan was among the adverse critics. At the extreme end of Elizabeth's reign the sceptical argument won respectful attention at home from Camden and Speed. But the old story still held its ground in England, even in the scholarly circle of which Sir Henry Savile was an ornament. The authenticity of the story of Lear and his ancestry was strenuously defended by Richard Harvey, Gabriel Harvey's brother, in *Philadelphus, or A Defence of Brutes, and the Brutans History* (1593), of which the dedication was accepted by Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, the Queen's favourite. The poet Drayton pursued a middle course, and in the introduction to his *Polyolbion* (1622), maintained 'as an advocate for the Muse' the Cambro-Briton traditions of the Trojan settlers, though he admitted historic difficulties. It is curious to notice how closely Milton's attitude resembled Drayton's. In his *History of Britain* he acknowledges the growth of doubt respecting Brute and his dynasty, but declines to abandon the story on the ground that it still enjoyed the approval of men 'not unread nor unlearned in antiquity,' and that its conservation was 'in favour of

Leir and the Elizabethan epic. Wherever the Trojan myth spread, the memory of Lear was known and honoured. The epic poets of the Elizabethan era showed no less zeal than the chroniclers in tracing through the ages the royal progress of the British Trojans, and although they were eclectic in their choice of episodes, they invariably retold the legend of Lear and his daughters. In 1586 William Warner in his *Albion's England*, a rambling poetic chronicle, from the time of Noah to (in its original form) that of William the Conqueror, gleaned much from Geoffrey of Monmouth and his followers, and laid stress on Lear's tragic history (Book III. ch. xiv). A year later the *Mirror for Magistrates* embodied in its selected tragedies of early Britain a long and piteous autobiography of Cordila, King Leire's youngest daughter. Similarly the greatest of Elizabethan epic poets, Edmund Spenser, devoted a canto of his *Faerie Queene* to the Trojan myth, and dwelt with pathetic sympathy on the sufferings of the aged monarch and his youngest child.[1]

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our English poets and rhetoricians, who by their art will know how to use them (the stories) judiciously.' The tale of Lear is related by Milton in full detail in its legendary cycle. (Cf. *Milton as a Historian*, by Prof. C. H. Firth, in the Proceedings of the British Academy, vol. iii. 1908.)

[1] Sir Guyon in the second book of the *Faerie Queene* (canto x) reads an 'ancient booke hight Briton moniments,' which gives an account of British Kings from Brute to Uther, father of King Arthur. King Leyr's experiences fill six stanzas (27–32). The version of the story by Warner, which is not very accessible and is a chief source of the old play, is printed in an Appendix to this volume.

The Brito-Trojan Kings and the Elizabethan drama. The birth of Elizabethan drama was contemporaneous with an uprising of national feeling. The drama sought a vast amount of its early sustenance from the early records of national history. The history-play was the most popular item in the repertory of the Elizabethan theatrical manager. In view of the habitual attitude of historical and epic writers, the dramatist and his audience were not likely to draw any fine distinction between insubstantial legend and attested fact. The heroes of the Trojan dynasty were consequently pressed into the theatrical service with the same energy and enthusiasm as the Plantagenets or early Tudor sovereigns. The adventures of King Gorboduc of the Trojan line, and of his quarrelsome sons Ferrex and Porrex, formed the topics of the first regular English tragedy. Before the end of the sixteenth century Brute, Locrine, Malmutius Donwallow, Elidure, King Lud, all joined King Lear in seeking on the Elizabethan stage the suffrages of the playgoer. The experiences of Uther Pendragon, his son King Arthur, Merlin, Vortigern, Hengist, Caradoc—great personages who were assigned to the extreme close of the primeval age of Britain—were also approved themes of contemporary dramatic effort.[1]

[1] Of the twelve pieces indicated in the text, only six, dealing with the stories of Locrine, Lear, Elidure, King Arthur, Merlin, and Caradoc, survive in print. The plays about Elidure and Caradoc were called respectively *Nobody and Somebody* (n.d.) and *The Valiant Welshman* (1615). Henslowe attests in his *Diary* the performance

The descent of the Lear story. The story of King Lear underwent singularly little change as it passed through the ages from pen to pen of chronicler or poet.[1] Such minor modifications as the legend experienced in its long descent from the twelfth to the sixteenth century seem due to casual errors of transcription. It is improbable that the old dramatist had recourse to any earlier narrative than that of his contemporary Holinshed, or that he placed reliance on any additional sources of information, save the poetic versions in *Albion's England*, the *Mirror for Magistrates* and the *Faerie Queene*. But although he confined his research to books of his own epoch, his play involuntarily reproduces without essential qualification the

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of the other cited plays, none of which survive. Distinction should be drawn between *The Life and Death of King Arthur*, which Henslowe notices as a (lost) work of Richard Hathway, and a piece on the same subject, *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, by Thomas Hughes and others, which is extant in an edition of 1587. The whole subject is ably treated by Prof. Felix Schelling in *The English Chronicle Play*, New York, 1902.

[1] A valuable account of the descent of the story of King Lear through English literature from Geoffrey of Monmouth to Shakespeare is given by Dr. Wilfrid Perrett, in Palaestra, vol. xxxv. Berlin, 1904, under the title of *The Story of King Lear from Geoffrey of Monmouth to Shakespeare*. Dr. Perrett enumerates fifty-two writers who retold Geoffrey of Monmouth's story before 1594, the date of the old play's composition. The differences are small. Dr. Perrett's analysis of the old play of *King Leir* and of Shakespeare's tragedy of the same name brings out many important details touching the sources of the two dramatists' information. The present edition of the old play stands indebted to Dr. Perrett's careful researches at many points.

original story of Geoffrey of Monmouth. On the small points in which Geoffrey is at variance with his imitators, the old dramatist echoes the notes of Holinshed or one of the three Elizabethan poets.

The old dramatist's use of his authorities. Much difference exists in the literature of Lear respecting the titles of the husbands of the King's two unfilial daughters. The majority follow Geoffrey in calling Goneril's husband Duke of Albany (*i. e.* Scotland), and Regan's husband, Duke of Cornwall. Shakespeare is faithful to this nomenclature. Holinshed reverses the husbands' titles, associating Goneril's married life with the ruler of Cornwall, and Regan's with that of Albany. The old dramatist adopts Holinshed's suggestion as far as Goneril is concerned, and bestows her hand in marriage on the King of Cornwall. But he seeks in Spenser, who therein differs from all his predecessors, the title of King of Cambria for the husband of Regan. The old dramatist in fact improved on Spenser by giving the King of Cambria the added Christian name of Morgan, which has no authority. This variation may be attributed to the peculiarly close juxtaposition in the *Mirror for Magistrates* of the traditional story of a personage of this name who figured in the ancient narrative as a son of the daughter Goneril, and as successor of Cordila on the British throne. To Spenser again the old dramatist seems to owe another original variation on the archetype, which makes Lear's two unfilial daughters cast lots as to which part of their father's kingdom

shall fall to each. In the standard version Lear makes the division on his sole and unprompted authority.[1]

The debt, however, to Warner's epic treatment of the fable seems larger than to Spenser's. From Warner comes the form 'Cordella' for the name of the King's youngest daughter, as well as the appellation 'the Gallian King' for Cordella's husband. Many phrases, too, in the old play echo the language of Warner's *Albion's England*.[2] Warner, moreover, alone gave the hint, which the old dramatist liberally expanded, of the eldest daughters' unfilial attempt on the old King's life.

Original developments. But in spite of the dramatist's fidelity to the main features of the tradition, he must be allowed ingenuity in stretching the scanty material, which the old story offered, to the full limits of a five-act drama. Judged by a Shakespearean standard, the old dramatist is a clumsy and perfunctory manipulator of the bare motives and actions of the medieval legend. But if we strictly compare his adaptation (to the exclusion of Shakespeare) with any earlier treatment of the theme in prose or poetry, we cannot deny him a fertility of invention, which issues in an astonishing advance on preceding efforts. He infuses a touch of living colour into more than one character or incident of which

[1] Spenser's employment in his version of the somewhat unusual words 'regiment' (*i. e.* 'dominion') and 'grutch' (*i. e.* complain) is adopted in the old play (see Glossary). See also notes on I. iii. 78; 119-120; II. i. 4.

[2] See notes on I. i. 42; I. iii. 93-94; II. ii. 59-60; III. iii. 43-46.

there is the merest hint in the earlier narratives. Elsewhere, wholly new characters and incidents lend the tale a variety which lies outside the scope of the ancient tradition.

Perillus. Of original embellishments, by far the most important is the character of Perillus, the old King's faithful companion. No such character figures in the current versions of the legend. Geoffrey of Monmouth vaguely notes that one knight attended the old King on his escape from England to his youngest daughter's home in France; all his followers had deserted him 'excepto quodam armigero.' In the *Gesta Romanorum* alone of all succeeding recensions is this feature of the tale repeated. There a single squire attends Lear on his arrival in France. But it may well be doubted whether such slender hints can be held responsible for the old dramatist's presentment of the deserted King's devoted servant. Perillus—in the old play—is to a far greater degree than his analogue, Kent, in Shakespeare's tragedy, one of the pillars of the action. There is point and freshness about the courtier's independence and self-respecting loyalty, which stiffen the whole dramatic fabric. Perillus's frank rebuke of King Leir's moral blindness in the opening scenes and his subsequent companionship of his old master in his lonely wanderings, give the fable a glow of humanity which would otherwise be wanting. Another new character is Skalliger, the disingenuous counsellor of the aged King, who first suggests the division of his property. He is sketched in far more slender outline than Perillus, but a substantial indication

is given, as the old play progresses, of the conflict in a vulgar mind between self-interest and loyalty. Although a child of the old dramatist's fancy, there possibly went to his making a vague word in Warner's *Albion's England*, where the old King exclaims in the distress of his abandonment 'bid none affy in friends.' The legendary dramatis personæ are invariably confined to the old King and his three daughters and their three husbands. A third character, who is first grafted on the old story by the dramatist, is the Gallian King's bluff breezy-tempered companion, Mumford, who is as brave a soldier as the Bastard in *King John*, and is cast in the same mould. Other new characters include, apart from subsidiary figures like the crude-witted watchmen and captains, the unprincipled messenger who is commissioned by Gonorill to murder her injured father. This 'shag-haired murdering wretch' (V. iv. 184) plays a part of some importance in the development of the plot. He is a careless villain of that conventional type which was dear to embryonic drama. A slight attempt is also made by the old dramatist for the first time to invest with individuality the characters of the unfilial daughters' husbands. Their denunciation of the cruel callousness of their wives is an original and human touch.

The new nomenclature. The nomenclature of the three wholly original characters of chief importance, Perillus, Skalliger and Mumford, betrays wild incoherence. Perillus is known to classical literature, notably to Ovid and Pliny, as

the inventor for the tyrant Phalaris of a brazen instrument of torture shaped like a bull, of which he was condemned by the patron to be the first victim.[1] Even less rational seems the bestowal of the designation, Skalliger, on Leir's less reputable counsellor. The name seems only known elsewhere as that of two great scholars of the Renaissance, in the familiar form Scaliger. The elder Scaliger's monumental treatise on the art of poetry was a text-book of scholarship in England and on the European continent through great part of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Mumford, the Gallian King's companion, is christened with no greater propriety. The word is a variant of the more familiar form Mountfort or Mountford. Employing a conventional pun the character

[1] For Ovid's mention of Perillus see *Ars Amatoria*, I. 653. In Holland's translation of Pliny's Nat. Hist. (1634, p. 504), the story of Perillus runs thus—

'As for *Perillus*, there is no man commendeth him for his workmanship, but holdeth him more cruel than *Phalaris* the Tyrant who set him a work, for that he devised a brasen Bull, to rost and fry condemned persons, in assuring the Tyrant that after the fire was made under it, they would when they cried seem to bellow like a Bull, and so rather make sport than move compassion; but this *Perillus* was the first himself that gave the hansel to the engine of his own invention, and although this was cruelty in the Tyrant, yet surely such a workman deserved no better a reward, and justly he felt the smart of it.'

Perillus' story is also told in the popular mediæval collection of stories *Gesta Romanorum* (no. 48), though it only figures in the Latin version, and is absent from the early English translations. Gower in his *Confessio Amantis*, lines 3295 *seq.*, also narrates the adventures of Perillus, though he mis-spells the name Berillus. Perillus is to be distinguished from Perellus, a notorious lawyer and usurer of Rome, whom Horace mentions in *Satires* iii. line 75.

remarks: 'I am kin to the Blunts, and I think the bluntest of all my kindred; therefore if I be too blunt with you, thank yourself for praying me to be so' (II. i. 44-47). The great Elizabethan family of the Blounts enjoyed the baronial title of Mountjoy, to which a mysterious allusion is possibly made there. On the other hand, the dramatist may be merely illustrating an irresponsible vein of frivolity.[1]

The courtship of Cordella. Of the new incidents grafted by the dramatist on the legend, the episode of the French king's hasty courtship of Cordella is most notable. Dismissed from her father's house on the day of her two sisters' weddings, King Leir's youngest daughter unexpectedly meets on the highway two men in the guise of palmers or pilgrims. One of the wayfarers makes love to her, and she accepts his offer of marriage. Neither knows the other's rank. Her lover proves to be the King of Gallia, who with his lighthearted friend and courtier, Mumford, has come to Britain on a frolic. Disguised as pilgrims or palmers they are bent on paying their addresses to fair British girls. Cordella's marriage is solemnised after due recognition without delay. Nowhere else does the matrimonial career of Cordella begin so unceremoniously. The

[1] The jest on the surname Blount is repeated in Thomas Thorpe's dedication of Marlowe's translation of the first book of Lucan (1600) to his friend Edward Blount: 'Blount, I purpose to be blunt with you.' The old dramatist indulges in many unimpressive puns of like calibre. Cf. II. iv. 126 ('*Cordella, cordial* to my heart'), and IV. viii. 13 ('to *hop* without her *hope*').

normal version as supplied by Holinshed shows how one of the Princes of Gallia, hearing of Cordelia's 'beauty, womanhood, and good conditions sent her father an offer of marriage.' Lear answered 'that the Prince might have his daughter, but as for any dower he could have none; for all was promised and assured to her other sisters already.' This reply carried no weight with the Prince, who took Cordelia 'to wife only moved thereto (I say) for respect of her person and amiable virtues.' The old dramatist has substituted for this tame solicitation the crudely comic episode of an accidental and unpremeditated courtship. Most of the striking features of the wanderings of Leir after his banishment by his daughters are likewise an invention of the old dramatist. The messenger's threat of murder may have been suggested by Warner, but the cruel thunderstorm, which, while it shakes the villain's nerve, exposes King Leir to terrible suffering, is due to no earlier version. The details of the meeting and reconciliation of Leir with his youngest daughter, and the old man's remorseful obeisances completely reconstruct a very bald passage in the traditional story.

The ending of the play. The ending of the old play follows the authentic legend without modification. Leir, after seeking asylum in France with his youngest daughter, returns to England with her and her husband at the head of an armed force. War is declared on Gonorill and Ragan and on their husbands, and the rout of the latter's armies brings the drama to its close. The unfilial daughters leave

the scene alive but ruined. No character suffers death. Leir is restored to his throne amid the rejoicings of Cordella and the Gallian King. The old dramatist ignores any later episodes of the old story which tells how Leir reigned three years after his triumphs, and was then succeeded by Cordella; how five years later Queen Cordella was driven from her throne by Morgan, son of her sister Gonorill, and how she finally committed suicide in prison.[1] The old dramatist gives an indication that he was acquainted with the later narrative of Cordelia's career by employing the name Morgan. But it remained for Shakespeare to associate the old King with his youngest daughter's death, and thus convert Lear's fate into inexorable tragedy.[2]

[1] In Spenser's *Faerie Queene* (II. x. xxxii.) the traditional account of Cordelia's restoration of her father and of her own unhappy end in a subsequent year runs thus—

'So to his [Lear's] crown she [Cordelia] him restored again;
In which he died, made ripe for death by eld,
And after willed it should to her remain,
Who peaceably the same long time did weld,
And all men's hearts in due obedience held;
Till that her sister's children, waxen strong,
Through proud ambition against her rebelled,
And overcome kept in prison long,
Till weary of that wretched life herself she hung.'

[2] The seventeenth-century ballad, entitled, *A Lamentable Song of the death of King Leare and his three Daughters*, closes like Shakespeare's tragedy with the deaths of Lear and his youngest daughter, who is called Cordila by the ballad-maker. The date of the ballad is uncertain, and some controversy has arisen over the question whether it were penned before or after Shakespeare's play. The balance of evidence seems against the priority of the ballad. It was printed

Shakespeare's treatment of the old drama. It may be admitted that in the absence of the old play, Shakespeare might well have detected in the legend all the tragic potency which he ultimately drew from it. Shakespeare refashioned and strengthened the great issues of the plot by methods which lay wholly outside the old dramatist's capacity. There is no trace of Lear's Fool in any earlier version. Shakespeare, too, sought an entirely new complication for the story by grafting on it complementarily the by-plot of the Duke of Gloucester and his sons, which he drew from a wholly different source, Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*. Nor was he satisfied with the catastrophe of the chronicles which contented the earlier dramatist. The restoration of Lear to his forsaken throne at the hands of Cordelia and her husband the Gallian King was rejected for the defeat of the foreign invaders, and for the death of Lear and Cordelia. But it remains manifest, none the less, that the great dramatist owed to his humble predecessor numerous suggestions, which he frankly adopted. Indeed, many of the

for the first time in 1620 in Richard Johnson's *Golden Garlands of Princely Pleasures and Delicate Delights*. The only copy of the book which appears to be known is in the British Museum, and is described on the title-page as 'the third edition.' But there is ground for believing that the book had not appeared before in any issue of earlier date. The ballad treats the main events of the Lear legend after the manner of Warner or Holinshed. The only divergence concerns the catastrophe, which there is good reason to regard as borrowed from Shakespeare's tragedy. The ballad, which Dr. Perrett carefully reprints from Johnson's volume (Palæstra, xxxv, pp. 125–142), has small pertinence to a study of the old play.

humanising touches, which the old dramatist imported into the legend, become main bases of Shakespeare's mighty superstructure. This admission does not underrate the larger metamorphosis, which Shakespeare's unapproachable tragic gift wrought in the whole scheme of the fable; it merely acknowledges a biological process.

Kent and Perillus. Kent is Shakespeare's most conspicuous debt to the old play. Kent's character and action reproduce, albeit with heightened emotion, the old dramatist's conception of Perillus. The change of name and the presentation of Lear's companion as a man young enough to be his son instead of his own age (as in the old play), leave untouched the essential points of resemblance. Hardly any of the speeches which Perillus and Leir address to one another failed to yield suggestion to Shakespeare. Perillus' stirring appeal to his sovereign to cancel his condemnation of Cordelia is met by the old King with these lines (II. iii. 99–103)—

> 'Urge this no more, and if thou love thy life:
> I say she is no daughter, that doth scorn
> To tell her father how he loveth him.
> Who ever speaketh hereof to me again,
> I will esteem him for my mortal foe.'

In Shakespeare's play the echo of these words is distinctly audible in the passionate denunciation of Kent by Lear in the opening scene, with its issue in Kent's banishment under threat of death (*King Lear*, I. i. 112 *seq.*)—

'Peace, Kent!
Come not between the dragon and his wrath.
I loved her most . . .
Kent, on thy life, no more.'

In the old play Perillus is not punished for his protest by banishment. But he absents himself from the court and does not meet his old master again until his unfilial daughters have thrust the King from their doors. Then he offers his companionship to the royal vagrant, who accepts it without recognising his old courtier. Shakespeare again adapted that episode to his purpose. Despairingly does Leir address Perillus (III. iii. 79-88) thus—

'Nay, if thou talk of *reason*, then be mute; . . .
What reason moveth thee to sorrow for me?'

These lines give the obvious cue to the famous speech of Shakespeare's King (II. iv. 267 *seq.*): 'O *reason* not the need,' &c. Similarly on Perillus' description of his heart-broken master (*Leir*, III. i. 12-13)—

'But he, the mirror of mild patience,
Puts up all wrongs, and never gives reply.'

Shakespeare founded Lear's piteous speech to the Fool—

'No I will be the pattern of all patience,
I will say nothing' (*Lear*, III. ii. 37).

On no other character in the old play does Shakespeare levy so many loans as on Perillus. But further proofs of contact, although of smaller interest, abound. The humanity

of Goneril's husband, the Duke of Albany, is drawn from the old dramatist's hint. There is a reminiscence of Skalliger in the Fool's otherwise inexplicable reference (I. iv. 139) to

> 'That lord that counselled thee
> To give away thy land.'

No lord gives such counsel to Lear in Shakespeare's play. It was the advice with which the old dramatist credited Skalliger, whose time-serving propensities helped to generate the wicked servility of Goneril's servant, Oswald. Something of the stage business which is associated in Shakespeare's tragedy with the exchange of letters, *e.g.* between Regan and Goneril (IV. ii. 82), Kent and Cordelia (IV. iii. 11, *seq.*), and Goneril and Edmund (IV. v, *passim*), seems traceable to the interception by Gonoril in the old play of letters addressed to Leir (III. v. 45, *seq.*) and to the passage of letters between Ragan and Gonoril (IV. iii. *passim*). Ragan's angry outburst of unfilial heartlessness on reading Gonoril's written complaint of the old King's 'presumption' (IV. iii. 14, *seq.*) may have given the cue to the splendid outcry in Shakespeare's piece of filial sympathy to which Cordelia gives passionate utterance on receiving Kent's written report of her father's distresses (IV. iii. 11-34).

Other of Shakespeare's adaptations. In Lear's terrible curse of Goneril, 'strike her *young bones* with lameness' (*King Lear*, II. iv. 165), Shakespeare adapts from the old piece Lear's taunting allusion to Goneril's 'young bones,'

i. e. unborn child (*King Leir*, III. iii. 27). Another borrowed feature of great impressiveness is the thunderstorm, which is the grimmest of all Lear's tortures in both pieces. So again Lear's twice-repeated offer at the close to kneel for pardon at the feet of his injured daughter Cordelia is an inspiration of Shakespeare's predecessor.[1]

The greatness and the glory of Shakespeare's achievement may depend little on these comparatively minor details. Shakespeare passed far beyond the bounds marked out by the older hand. His powers through the tragedy are always mounting, until they finally gain almost celestial heights. The historic tradition of Cordelia's latest years, and her suicide in prison, may have weighed with Shakespeare in framing his last scenes. But in his exalted conception of the reason and manner of her death, he obeyed, if anywhere, the

[1] Cf. *King Leir*, V. iv. 203–206.

Cord. But look, dear father, look, behold and see;
Thy loving daughter speaketh unto thee. [*She kneels.*
Leir. O stand thou up, it is my part to kneel,
And ask forgiveness for my former faults.

He rises at his daughter's entreaty, only to 'kneel again, till pardon be resigned.' Stage directions appended to this passage twice enjoin on the old man the act of kneeling. So in Shakespeare's *King Lear*, IV. vii. 57–59, Cordelia says to her father—

'O, look upon me, sir.
And hold your hand in benediction o'er me:
No, sir, you must not *kneel*.'

Again, V. iii. 10–11, Lear exclaims in his daughter's ear—

'When thou dost ask me blessing, I'll *kneel down*
And ask of thee forgiveness.'

clear untutored call of his genius. There the old drama could give him small help. The intensity of his tragic power through the concluding acts of *King Lear* is all his own. The final goal of the tragedy was reached without appeal to external aid. Nevertheless the old dramatist deserves a reverent commemoration as the guide of Shakespeare's steps in the first stages of his impressive journey, which ended in the apotheosis of King Lear and his daughter.

THE

True Chronicle History of King Leir, and his three daughters, Gonorill, Ragan, and Cordella.

As it hath been divers and sundry times lately acted.

LONDON,
Printed by Simon Stafford for John Wright, and are to be sold at his shop at Christ's Church door, next Newgate-Market. 1605.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

KING LEIR, king of Britain (Brittany).
SKALLIGER, PERILLUS, } King Leir's counsellors.
The Gallian king, king of France, husband of Cordella.
MUMFORD, the Gallian king's attendant.
The king of Cornwall, husband of Gonorill.
[MORGAN], king of Cambria, husband of Ragan.
Servant to the king of Cornwall.
Servant to the king of Cambria.
Messenger [or Murtherer], in the service of Gonorill.
Ambassador from Gallia to Britain.
First Mariner.
Second Mariner.
Captain of the Watch.
First Watchman.
Second Watchman.
First British Captain.
Second British Captain.
The 'chief' (or mayor) of a British town.

GONORILL, eldest daughter of King Leir, wife of the king of Cornwall.
RAGAN, second daughter of King Leir, wife of the king of Cambria.
CORDELLA, youngest daughter of King Leir, wife of the Gallian king.

Nobles at King Leir's court; nobles of Gallia; attendants on the king of Cornwall; nobles of the prince of Cambria; Gallian soldiers; soldiers of Cornwall and Cambria.

SCENE: *Britain, Cambria, Cornwall, and Gallia.*

KING LEIR
AND HIS THREE DAUGHTERS

ACT I

SCENE I. *Presence chamber in King* Leir's *palace at Troynovant.*

Enter King Leir, Skalliger, Perillus, *and Nobles.*

Leir. Thus to our grief the obsequies perform'd
Of our too late deceas'd and dearest queen,
Whose soul I hope, possess'd of heavenly joys,
Doth ride in triumph 'mongst the cherubins;
Let us request your grave advice, my lords,
For the disposing of our princely daughters,
For whom our care is specially employ'd,
As nature bindeth, to advance their states,
In royal marriage with some princely mates:
For wanting now their mother's good advice,
Under whose government they have received
A perfit pattern of a virtuous life:
Left as it were a ship without a stern,

Or silly sheep without a pastor's care ;
Although ourselves do dearly tender them,
Yet are we ignorant of their affairs :
For fathers best do know to govern sons ;
But daughters' steps the mother's counsel turns.
A son we want for to succeed our crown,
And course of time hath cancelled the date
Of further issue from our withered loins :
One foot already hangeth in the grave,
And age hath made deep furrows in my face :
The world of me, I of the world am weary,
And I would fain resign these earthly cares,
And think upon the welfare of my soul :
Which by no better means may be effected,
Than by resigning up the crown from me,
In equal dowry to my daughters three.

Skall. A worthy care, my liege, which well declares,
The zeal you bare unto our quondam queen :
And since your grace hath licens'd me to speak,
I censure thus ; your majesty knowing well,
What several suitors your princely daughters have,
To make them each a jointure more or less,
As is their worth, to them that love profess.

Leir. No more, nor less, but even all alike,
My zeal is fix'd, all fashion'd in one mould :
Wherefore unpartial shall my censure be,
Both old and young shall have alike for me.

Nobles. My gracious lord, I heartily do wish,
That God had lent you an heir indubitate,
Which might have set upon your royal throne,
When fates should loose the prison of your life,
By whose succession all this doubt might cease;
And as by you, by him we might have peace.
But after-wishes ever come too late,
And nothing can revoke the course of fate:
Wherefore, my liege, my censure deems it best,
To match them with some of your neighbour kings,
Bord'ring within the bounds of Albion,
By whose united friendship, this our state
May be protected 'gainst all foreign hate.

Leir. Herein, my lords, your wishes sort with mine,
And mine, I hope, do sort with heavenly powers:
For at this instant two near neighbouring kings,
Of Cornwall and of Cambria, motion love
To my two daughters, Gonorill and Ragan.
My youngest daughter, fair Cordella, vows
No liking to a monarch, unless love allows.
She is solicited by divers peers;
But none oft hem her partial fancy hears.
Yet, if my policy may her beguile,
I'll match her to some king within this isle,
And so establish such a perfit peace,
As Fortune's force shall ne'er prevail to cease.

Per. Of us and ours, your gracious care, my lord,

Deserves an everlasting memory,
To be enroll'd in chronicles of fame,
By never-dying perpetuity :
Yet to become so provident a prince,
Lose not the title of a loving father :
Do not force love, where fancy cannot dwell,
Lest streams, being stopp'd, above the banks do swell.
Leir. I am resolv'd, and even now my mind
Doth meditate a sudden stratagem,
To try which of my daughters loves me best :
Which till I know, I cannot be in rest.
This granted, when they jointly shall contend,
Each to exceed the other in their love :
Then at the vantage will I take Cordella,
Even as she doth protest she loves me best,
I'll say, then, daughter, grant me one request,
To shew thou lovest me as thy sisters do,
Accept a husband, whom myself will woo.
This said, she cannot well deny my suit,
Although, poor soul, her senses will be mute :
Then will I triumph in my policy,
And match her with a king of Brittany.
Skall. I'll to them before, and bewray your secrecy.
Per. Thus fathers think their children to beguile,
And oftentimes themselves do first repent,
When heavenly powers do frustrate their intent. *Exeunt.*

Scene II. *A room in King* Leir's *palace.*

Enter Gonorill *and* Ragan.

Gon. I marvel, Ragan, how you can endure
To see that proud pert peat, our youngest sister,
So slightly to account of us, her elders,
As if we were no better than herself!
We cannot have a quaint device so soon,
Or new-made fashion, of our choice invention;
But if she like it, she will have the same,
Or study newer to exceed us both.
Besides, she is so nice and so demure;
So sober, courteous, modest, and precise,
That all the court hath work enough to do,
To talk how she exceedeth me and you.

Ragan. What should I do? would it were in my power,
To find a cure for this contagious ill:
Some desperate medicine must be soon applied,
To dim the glory of her mounting fame;
Else ere't be long, she'll have both prick and praise,
And we must be set by for working days.
Do you not see what several choice of suitors
She daily hath, and of the best degree?
Say, amongst all, she hap to fancy one,
And have a husband whenas we have none:
Why then, by right, to her we must give place,

Though it be ne'er so much to our disgrace.

Gon. By my virginity, rather than she shall have
A husband before me,
I'll marry one or other in his shirt:
And yet I have made half a grant already
Of my good will unto the king of Cornwall.

Ragan. Swear not so deeply, sister, here cometh my Lord Skalliger.
Something his hasty coming doth import.

Enter Skalliger.

Skall. Sweet princesses, I am glad I met you here so luckily,
Having good news which doth concern you both,
And craveth speedy expedition.

Ragan. For God's sake tell us what it is, my lord,
I am with child until you utter it.

Skall. Madam, to save your longing, this it is:
Your father in great secrecy today
Told me, he means to marry you out of hand
Unto the noble prince of Cambria;
You, madam, to the king of Cornwall's grace:
Your younger sister he would fain bestow
Upon the rich king of Hibernia:
But that he doubts, she hardly will consent;
For hitherto she ne'er could fancy him.
If she do yield, why then, between you three,
He will divide his kingdom for your dowries.

But yet there is a further mystery,
Which, so you will conceal, I will disclose.
Gon. Whate'er thou speak'st to us, kind Skalliger,
Think that thou speak'st it only to thyself.
Skall. He earnestly desireth for to know,
Which of you three do bear most love to him,
And on your loves he so extremely dotes,
As never any did, I think, before.
He presently doth mean to send for you,
To be resolv'd of this tormenting doubt:
And look, whose answer pleaseth him the best,
They shall have most unto their marriages.
Ragan. O that I had some pleasing mermaid's voice,
For to enchant his senseless senses with!
Skall. For he supposeth that Cordella will,
Striving to go beyond you in her love,
Promise to do whatever he desires:
Then will he straight enjoin her for his sake,
The Hibernian king in marriage for to take.
This is the sum of all I have to say;
Which being done, I humbly take my leave,
Not doubting but your wisdoms will foresee
What course will best unto your good agree.
Gon. Thanks, gentle Skalliger, thy kindness undeserved
Shall not be unrequited, if we live. [*Exit* Skalliger.
Ragan. Now have we fit occasion offer'd us,
To be reveng'd upon her unperceiv'd.

Gon. Nay, our revenge we will inflict on her
Shall be accounted piety in us:
I will so flatter with my doting father,
As he was ne'er so flatter'd in his life.
Nay, I will say, that if it be his pleasure,
To match me to a beggar, I will yield:
For why, I know whatever I do say,
He means to match me with the Cornwall king.

Ragan. I'll say the like: for I am well assured,
Whate'er I say to please the old man's mind,
Who dotes, as if he were a child again,
I shall enjoy the noble Cambrian prince:
Only, to feed his humour, will suffice,
To say, I am content with any one
Whom he'll appoint me; this will please him more
Than e'er Apollo's music pleased Jove.

Gon. I smile to think, in what a woeful plight
Cordella will be, when we answer thus:
For she will rather die, than give consent
To join in marriage with the Irish king:
So will our father think, she loveth him not,
Because she will not grant to his desire.
Which we will aggravate in such bitter terms,
That he will soon convert his love to hate:
For he, you know, is always in extremes.

Ragan. Not all the world could lay a better plot,
I long till it be put in practice. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III. *Presence chamber in King* Leir's *palace.*

Enter Leir *and* Perillus.

Leir. Perillus, go seek my daughters,
Will them immediately come and speak with me.
Per. I will, my gracious lord. [*Exit.*
Leir. Oh, what a combat feels my panting heart,
'Twixt children's love, and care of common weal!
How dear my daughters are unto my soul,
None knows, but He, that knows my thoughts and secret deeds.
Ah, little do they know the dear regard,
Wherein I hold their future state to come:
When they securely sleep on beds of down,
These aged eyes do watch for their behalf:
While they, like wantons, sport in youthful toys,
This throbbing heart is pierced with dire annoys.
As doth the sun exceed the smallest star,
So much the father's love exceeds the child's.
Yet my complaints are causeless: for the world
Affords not children more conformable:
And yet, methinks, my mind presageth still
I know not what; and yet I fear some ill.

Enter Perillus *with the three daughters.*

Well, here my daughters come: I have found out

A present means to rid me of this doubt.

Gon. Our royal lord and father, in all duty,
We come to know the tenour of your will,
Why you so hastily have sent for us.

Leir. Dear Gonorill, kind Ragan, sweet Cordella,
Ye flourishing branches of a kingly stock,
Sprung from a tree that once did flourish green,
Whose blossoms now are nipp'd with winter's frost,
And pale grim death doth wait upon my steps,
And summons me unto his next assizes.
Therefore, dear daughters, as ye tender the safety
Of him that was the cause of your first being,
Resolve a doubt which much molests my mind,
Which of you three to me would prove most kind;
Which loves me most, and which at my request
Will soonest yield unto their father's hest.

Gon. I hope, my gracious father makes no doubt
Of any of his daughters' love to him:
Yet for my part, to shew my zeal to you,
Which cannot be in windy words rehears'd,
I prize my love to you at such a rate,
I think my life inferior to my love.
Should you enjoin me for to tie a millstone
About my neck, and leap into the sea,
At your command I willingly would do it:
Yea, for to do you good, I would ascend
The highest turret in all Brittany,

And from the top leap headlong to the ground:
Nay, more, should you appoint me for to marry
The meanest vassal in the spacious world,
Without reply I would accomplish it:
In brief, command whatever you desire,
And if I fail, no favour I require.

Leir. O, how thy words revive my dying soul!

Cor. O, how I do abhor this flattery!

Leir. But what saith Ragan to her father's will?

Ragan. O, that my simple utterance could suffice,
To tell the true intention of my heart,
Which burns in zeal of duty to your grace,
And never can be quench'd, but by desire
To shew the same in outward forwardness.
Oh, that there were some other maid that durst
But make a challenge of her love with me;
I'd make her soon confess she never loved
Her father half so well as I do you.
Ay, then my deeds should prove in plainer case,
How much my zeal aboundeth to your grace:
But for them all, let this one mean suffice.
To ratify my love before your eyes:
I have right noble suitors to my love,
No worse than kings, and haply I love one:
Yet, would you have me make my choice anew,
I'd bridle fancy, and be rul'd by you.

Leir. Did never Philomel sing so sweet a note.

Cor. Did never flatterer tell so false a tale.
Leir. Speak now, Cordella, make my joys at full,
And drop down nectar from thy honey lips.
Cor. I cannot paint my duty forth in words,
I hope my deeds shall make report for me:
But look what love the child doth owe the father,
The same to you I bear, my gracious lord.
Gon. Here is an answer answerless indeed:
Were you my daughter, I should scarcely brook it.
Ragan. Dost thou not blush, proud peacock as thou art,
To make our father such a slight reply?
Leir. Why how now, minion, are you grown so proud?
Doth our dear love make you thus peremptory?
What, is your love become so small to us,
As that you scorn to tell us what it is?
Do you love us, as every child doth love
Their father? True indeed, as some,
Who by disobedience short their father's days,
And so would you; some are so father-sick,
That they make means to rid them from the world;
And so would you: some are indifferent,
Whether their aged parents live or die;
And so are you. But, did'st thou know, proud girl,
What care I had to foster thee to this,
Ah, then thou would'st say as thy sisters do:
Our life is less, than love we owe to you.

Cor. Dear father, do not so mistake my words,
Nor my plain meaning be misconstru'd;
My tongue was never us'd to flattery.
Gon. You were not best say I flatter: if you do,
My deeds shall shew, I flatter not with you.
I love my father better than thou canst.
Cor. The praise were great, spoke from another's mouth:
But it should seem your neighbours dwell far off.
Ragan. Nay, here is one, that will confirm as much
As she hath said, both for myself and her.
I say, thou dost not wish my father's good.
Cor. Dear father——
Leir. Peace, bastard imp, no issue of King Leir,
I will not hear thee speak one tittle more.
Call not me father, if thou love thy life,
Nor these thy sisters once presume to name:
Look for no help henceforth from me nor mine;
Shift as thou wilt, and trust unto thyself:
My kingdom will I equally divide
'Twixt thy two sisters to their royal dower,
And will bestow them worthy their deserts:
This done, because thou shalt not have the hope
To have a child's part in the time to come,
I presently will dispossess myself,
And set up these upon my princely throne.
Gon. I ever thought that pride would have a fall.

Ragan. Plain dealing, sister: your beauty is so sheen,
You need no dowry to make you be a queen.
[*Exeunt* Leir, Gonorill, Ragan.

Cor. Now whither, poor forsaken, shall I go,
When mine own sisters triumph in my woe?
But unto Him which doth protect the just,
In Him will poor Cordella put her trust.
These hands shall labour, for to get my spending;
And so I'll live until my days have ending. [*Exit.*

Per. Oh how I grieve, to see my lord thus fond,
To dote so much upon vain flattering words.
Ah, if he but with good advice had weighed,
The hidden tenour of her humble speech,
Reason to rage should not have given place,
Nor poor Cordella suffer such disgrace. [*Exit.*

ACT II.

Scene I. *The palace of the Gallian king.*

Enter the Gallian *king with* Mumford, *and three nobles more.*

King. Dissuade me not, my lords, I am resolv'd,
This next fair wind to sail for Brittany,
In some disguise, to see if flying fame
Be not too prodigal in the wondrous praise
Of these three nymphs, the daughters of King Leir.

If present view do answer absent praise,
And eyes allow of what our ears have heard,
And Venus stand auspicious to my vows,
And fortune favour what I take in hand;
I will return seiz'd of as rich a prize
As Jason, when he won the golden fleece.
Mum. Heavens grant you may: the match were full of honour,
And well beseeming the young Gallian king.
I would your grace would favour me so much,
As make me partner of your pilgrimage.
I long to see the gallant British dames,
And feed mine eyes upon their rare perfections:
For till I know the contrary, I'll say,
Our dames in France are far more fair than they.
King. Lord Mumford, you have saved me a labour,
In off'ring that which I did mean to ask:
And I most willingly accept your company.
Yet first I will enjoin you to observe
Some few conditions which I shall propose.
Mum. So that you do not tie mine eyes for looking
After the amorous glances of fair dames:
So that you do not tie my tongue from speaking,
My lips from kissing, when occasion serves,
My hands from congees, and my knees to bow
To gallant girls; which were a task more hard,
Than flesh and blood is able to endure:

Command what else you please, I rest content.

King. To bind thee from a thing thou canst not leave,
Were but a mean to make thee seek it more:
And therefore speak, look, kiss, salute for me;
In these myself am like to second thee.
Now hear thy task. I charge thee from the time
That first we set sail for the British shore,
To use no words of dignity to me,
But in the friendliest manner that thou canst,
Make use of me as thy companion:
For we will go disguis'd in palmers' weeds,
That no man shall mistrust us what we are.

Mum. If that be all, I'll fit your turn, I warrant you. I am some kin to the Blunts, and, I think, the bluntest of all my kindred; therefore if I be too blunt with you, thank yourself for praying me to be so.

King. Thy pleasant company will make the way seem short.
It resteth now, that in my absence hence,
I do commit the government to you,
My trusty lords and faithful counsellors.
Time cutteth off the rest I have to say:
The wind blows fair, and I must needs away.

Nobles. Heavens send your voyage to as good effect,
As we your land do purpose to protect. [*Exeunt.*

Artificial Illism of this scene.

SCENE II. *On the road to King* Leir's *palace at Troynovant.*

Enter the king of Cornwall *and his man booted and spurred, a riding wand and a letter in his hand.*

Corn. But how far distant are we from the court?
Serv. Some twenty miles, my lord, or thereabouts.
Corn. It seemeth to me twenty thousand miles:
Yet hope I to be there within this hour.
Serv. Then are you like to ride alone for me. [*To himself.*
I think my lord is weary of his life.
Corn. Sweet Gonorill, I long to see thy face,
Which hast so kindly gratified my love.

Enter the king of Cambria *booted and spurred, and his man with a wand and a letter.*

Cam. Get a fresh horse: for by my soul I swear,
[*He looks on the letter.*
I am past patience, longer to forbear
The wished sight of my beloved mistress,
Dear Ragan, stay and comfort of my life.
Serv. Now what in God's name doth my lord intend?
[*To himself.*
He thinks he ne'er shall come at's journey's end.
I would he had old Daedalus' waxen wings,
That he might fly, so I might stay behind:
For ere we get to Troynovant, I see,
He quite will tire himself, his horse, and me.

Cornwall *and* Cambria *look one upon another, and start to see each other there.*

Corn. Brother of Cambria, we greet you well,
As one whom here we little did expect.
Cam. Brother of Cornwall, met in happy time:
I thought as much to have met with the souldan of Persia,
As to have met you in this place, my lord.
No doubt, it is about some great affairs,
That makes you here so slenderly accompanied.
Corn. To say the truth, my lord, it is no less,
And for your part some hasty wind of chance
Hath blown you hither thus upon the sudden.
Cam. My lord, to break off further circumstances,
For at this time I cannot brook delays:
Tell you your reason, I will tell you mine.
Corn. In faith, content, and therefore to be brief;
For I am sure my haste's as great as yours:
I am sent for, to come unto King Leir,
Who by these present letters promiseth
His eldest daughter, lovely Gonorill,
To me in marriage, and for present dowry,
The moiety or half his regiment.
The lady's love I long ago possess'd:
But until now I never had the father's.
Cam. You tell me wonders, yet I will relate
Strange news, and henceforth we must brothers call;

Witness these lines: his honourable age,
Being weary of the troubles of his crown,
His princely daughter Ragan will bestow
On me in marriage, with half his seignories,
Whom I would gladly have accepted of,
With the third part, her complements are such.
Corn. If I have one half, and you have the other,
Then between us we must needs have the whole.
Cam. The hole! how mean you that? 'sblood, I hope,
We shall have two holes between us.
Corn. Why, the whole kingdom.
Cam. Ay, that's very true.
Corn. What then is left for his third daughter's dowry,
Lovely Cordella, whom the world admires?
Cam. 'Tis very strange, I know not what to think,
Unless they mean to make a nun of her.
Corn. 'Twere pity such rare beauty should be hid
Within the compass of a cloister's wall:
But howsoe'er, if Leir's words prove true,
It will be good, my lord, for me and you.
Cam. Then let us haste, all danger to prevent,
For fear delays do alter his intent. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III. *A room in King* Leir's *palace.*

Enter Gonorill *and* Ragan.

Gon. Sister, when did you see Cordella last,
That pretty piece, that thinks none good enough
To speak to her, because, sir-reverence,
She hath a little beauty extraordinary?

Ragan. Since time my father warn'd her from his presence,
I never saw her, that I can remember.
God give her joy of her surpassing beauty;
I think, her dowry will be small enough.

Gon. I have incens'd my father so against her,
As he will never be reclaim'd again.

Ragan. I was not much behind to do the like.

Gon. Faith, sister, what moves you to bear her such good will?

Ragan. In truth, I think, the same that moveth you;
Because she doth surpass us both in beauty.

Gon. Beshrew your fingers, how right you can guess:
I tell you true, it cuts me to the heart.

Ragan. But we will keep her low enough, I warrant,
And clip her wings for mounting up too high.

Gon. Who ever hath her, shall have a rich marriage of her.

Ragan. She were right fit to make a parson's wife:

For they, men say, do love fair women well,
And many times do marry them with nothing.
Gon. With nothing! marry, God forbid: why, are there any such?
Ragan. I mean, no money.
Gon. I cry you mercy, I mistook you much:
And she is far too stately for the church;
She'll lay her husband's benefice on her back,
Even in one gown, if she may have her will.
Ragan. In faith, poor soul, I pity her a little.
Would she were less fair, or more fortunate.
Well, I think long until I see my Morgan,
The gallant prince of Cambria, here arrive.
Gon. And so do I, until the Cornwall king
Present himself, to consummate my joys.
Peace, here cometh my father.

Enter Leir, Perillus, *and others.*

Leir. Cease, good my lords, and sue not to reverse
Our censure, which is now irrevocable,
We have dispatched letters of contract
Unto the kings of Cambria and of Cornwall;
Our hand and seal will justify no less:
Then do not so dishonour me, my lords,
As to make shipwreck of our kingly word.
I am as kind as is the pelican,
That kills itself, to save her young ones' lives:

And yet as jealous as the princely eagle,
That kills her young ones, if they do but dazzle
Upon the radiant splendour of the sun.
Within this two days I expect their coming.

Enter kings of Cornwall *and* Cambria.

But in good time, they are arriv'd already.
This haste of yours, my lords, doth testify
The fervent love you bear unto my daughters:
And think yourselves as welcome to King Leir,
As ever Priam's children were to him.

Corn. My gracious lord, and father too, I hope,
Pardon, for that I made no greater haste:
But were my horse as swift as were my will,
I long ere this had seen your majesty.

Cam. No other 'scuse of absence can I frame,
Than what my brother hath inform'd your grace:
For our undeserved welcome, we do vow,
Perpetually to rest at your command.

Corn. But you, sweet love, illustrious Gonorill,
The regent, and the sovereign of my soul,
Is Cornwall welcome to your excellency?

Gon. As welcome, as Leander was to Hero,
Or brave Aeneas to the Carthage queen:
So and more welcome is your grace to me.

Cam. Oh, may my fortune prove no worse than his,
Since heavens do know, my fancy is as much.

Dear Ragan, say, if welcome unto thee;
All welcomes else will little comfort me.
Ragan. As gold is welcome to the covetous eye,
As sleep is welcome to the traveller,
As is fresh water to sea-beaten men,
Or moist'ned showers unto the parched ground,
Or anything more welcomer than this,
So and more welcome lovely Morgan is.
Leir. What resteth then, but that we consummate
The celebration of these nuptial rites?
My kingdom I do equally divide.
Princes, draw lots, and take your chance as falls.
[*Then they draw lots.*
These I resign as freely unto you,
As erst by true succession they were mine.
And here I do freely dispossess my self,
And make you two my true adopted heirs:
My self will sojourn with my son of Cornwall,
And take me to my prayers and my beads.
I know my daughter Ragan will be sorry,
Because I do not spend my days with her:
Would I were able to be with both at once;
They are the kindest girls in Christendom.
Per. I have been silent all this while, my lord,
To see if any worthier than myself,
Would once have spoke in poor Cordella's cause:
But love or fear ties silence to their tongues.

Oh, hear me speak for her, my gracious lord,
Whose deeds have not deserv'd this ruthless doom,
As thus to disinherit her of all.

Leir. Urge this no more, and if thou love thy life:
I say she is no daughter, that doth scorn
To tell her father how she loveth him.
Whoever speaketh hereof to me again,
I will esteem him for my mortal foe.
Come, let us in, to celebrate with joy,
The happy nuptials of these lovely pairs.

[*Exeunt omnes, manet* Perillus.

Per. Ah, who so blind, as they that will not see
The near approach of their own misery?
Poor lady, I extremely pity her:
And whilst I live, each drop of my heart blood
Will I strain forth, to do her any good. [*Exit.*

Scene IV. *The open country in Britain.*

Enter the Gallian *king, and* Mumford, *disguised like pilgrims.*

Mum. My lord, how do you brook this British air?

King. 'My lord,' I told you of this foolish humour,
And bound you to the contrary, you know.

Mum. Pardon me for once, my lord; I did forget.

King. 'My lord' again? then let's have nothing else,
And so be ta'en for spies, and then 'tis well.

Mum. 'Swounds, I could bite my tongue in two for anger:

For God's sake name yourself some proper name.
King. Call me Tresillus: I'll call thee Denapoll.
Mum. Might I be made the monarch of the world,
I could not hit upon these names, I swear.
King. Then call me Will, I'll call thee Jack.
Mum. Well, be it so, for I have well deserv'd to be call'd Jack.
King. Stand close; for here a British lady cometh:

Enter Cordella.

A fairer creature ne'er mine eyes beheld.
Cor. This is a day of joy unto my sisters,
Wherein they both are married unto kings;
And I, by birth, as worthy as themselves,
Am turn'd into the world, to seek my fortune.
How may I blame the fickle queen of chance,
That maketh me a pattern of her power?
Ah, poor weak maid, whose imbecility
Is far unable to endure these brunts.
Oh, father Leir, how dost thou wrong thy child,
Who always was obedient to thy will!
But why accuse I Fortune and my father?
No, no, it is the pleasure of my God:
And I do willingly embrace the rod.
King. It is no goddess; for she doth complain
On Fortune, and th' unkindness of her father,
Cor. These costly robes ill fitting my estate,

I will exchange for other meaner habit.
Mum. Now if I had a kingdom in my hands,
I would exchange it for a milkmaid's smock and petticoat,
That she and I might shift our clothes together.
Cor. I will betake me to my thread and needle,
And earn my living with my fingers' ends.
Mum. O brave! God willing, thou shalt have my custom.
By sweet St. Denis, here I sadly swear,
For all the shirts and night-gear that I wear.
Cor. I will profess and vow a maiden's life.
Mum. Then I protest thou shalt not have my custom.
King. I can forbear no longer for to speak:
For if I do, I think my heart will break.
Mum. 'Sblood, Will, I hope you are not in love with my sempster.
King. I am in such a labyrinth of love,
As that I know not which way to get out.
Mum. You'll ne'er get out, unless you first get in.
King. I prithee, Jack, cross not my passions.
Mum. Prithee, Will, to her, and try her patience.
King. Thou fairest creature, whatsoe'er thou art,
That ever any mortal eyes beheld,
Vouchsafe to me, who have o'erheard thy woes,
To shew the cause of these thy sad laments.
Cor. Ah pilgrims, what avails to shew the cause,
When there's no means to find a remedy?
King. To utter grief doth ease a heart o'ercharg'd.

Cor. To touch a sore, doth aggravate the pain.
King. The silly mouse, by virtue of her teeth,
Releas'd the princely lion from the net.
Cor. Kind palmer, which so much desir'st to hear
The tragic tale of my unhappy youth:
Know this in brief, I am the hapless daughter
Of Leir, sometime king of Brittany.
King. Why, who debars his honourable age,
From being still the king of Brittany?
Cor. None, but himself hath dispossess'd himself,
And given all his kingdom to the kings
Of Cornwall and of Cambria, with my sisters.
King. Hath he given nothing to your lovely self?
Cor. He lov'd me not, and therefore gave me nothing,
Only because I could not flatter him:
And in this day of triumph to my sisters,
Doth Fortune triumph in my overthrow.
King. Sweet lady, say there should come a king,
As good as either of your sisters' husbands,
To crave your love, would you accept of him?
Cor. Oh, do not mock with those in misery,
Nor do not think, though Fortune have the power,
To spoil mine honour, and debase my state,
That she hath any interest in my mind:
For if the greatest monarch on the earth,
Should sue to me in this extremity,
Except my heart could love, and heart could like,

Better than any that I ever saw,
His great estate no more should move my mind,
Than mountains move by blast of every wind.
King. Think not, sweet nymph, 'tis holy palmers' guise,
To grieved souls fresh torments to devise:
Therefore in witness of my true intent,
Let heaven and earth bear record of my words:
There is a young and lusty Gallian king,
So like to me, as I am to myself,
That earnestly doth crave to have thy love,
And join with thee in Hymen's sacred bonds.
Cor. The like to thee did ne'er these eyes behold!
Oh, live to add new torments to my grief!
Why did'st thou thus entrap me unawares?
Ah, palmer, my estate doth not befit
A kingly marriage, as the case now stands.
Whilom whenas I liv'd in honour's height,
A prince perhaps might postulate my love:
Now misery, dishonour, and disgrace,
Hath light on me, and quite revers'd the case.
Thy king will hold thee wise, if thou surcease
The suit, whereas no dowry will ensue.
Then be advised, palmer, what to do:
Cease for thy king, seek for thyself to woo.
King. Your birth's too high for any but a king.
Cor. My mind is low enough to love a palmer,
Rather than any king upon the earth.

King. O, but you never can endure their life,
Which is so straight and full of penury.
Cor. O yes, I can, and happy if I might:
I'll hold thy palmer's staff within my hand,
And think it is the sceptre of a queen.
Sometime I'll set thy bonnet on my head,
And think I wear a rich imperial crown.
Sometime I'll help thee in thy holy prayers,
And think I am with thee in paradise.
Thus I'll mock Fortune, as she mocketh me,
And never will my lovely choice repent:
For, having thee, I shall have all content.
King. 'Twere sin to hold her longer in suspense,
Since that my soul hath vow'd she shall be mine.
Ah, dear Cordella, cordial to my heart,
I am no palmer, as I seem to be,
But hither come in this unknown disguise,
To view th' admired beauty of those eyes.
I am the king of Gallia, gentle maid,
Although thus slenderly accompanied,
And yet thy vassal by imperious love,
And sworn to serve thee everlastingly.
Cor. Whate'er you be, of high or low descent,
All's one to me, I do request but this:
That as I am, you will accept of me,
And I will have you whatsoe'er you be:
Yet well I know, you come of royal race,

I see such sparks of honour in your face.

Mum. Have palmers' weeds such power to win fair ladies?
Faith, then I hope the next that falls is mine:
Upon condition I no worse might speed,
I would for ever wear a palmer's weed.
I like an honest and plain dealing wench,
That swears, without exceptions, I will have you.
These foppets, that know not whether to love a man or no, except they first go ask their mother's leave, by this hand, I hate them ten times worse than poison.

King. What resteth then our happiness to procure?

Mum. Faith, go to church, to make the matter sure.

King. It shall be so, because the world shall say,
King Leir's three daughters were wedded in one day:
The celebration of this happy chance,
We will defer, until we come to France.

Mum. I like the wooing that's not long a-doing.
Well, for her sake, I know what I know:
I'll never marry whilst I live,
Except I have one of these British ladies,
My humour is alienated from the maids of France. [*Exeunt.*

ACT III.

Scene I. *A road leading to Cornwall.*

Enter Perillus *solus.*

Per. The king hath dispossess'd himself of all,
Those to advance, which scarce will give him thanks:
His youngest daughter he hath turn'd away,
And no man knows what is become of her.
He sojourns now in Cornwall with the eldest,
Who flatter'd him, until she did obtain
That at his hands, which now she doth possess:
And now she sees he hath no more to give,
It grieves her heart to see her father live.
Oh, whom should man trust in this wicked age,
When children thus against their parents rage?
But he, the mirror of mild patience,
Puts up all wrongs, and never gives reply:
Yet shames she not in most opprobrious sort
To call him fool and dotard to his face,
And sets her parasites of purpose oft
In scoffing wise to offer him disgrace.
Oh iron age! O times! O monstrous, vild,
When parents are contemned of the child!
His pension she hath half restrain'd from him,
And will, ere long, the other half, I fear;
For she thinks nothing is bestowed in vain,

But that which doth her father's life maintain.
Trust not alliance; but trust strangers rather,
Since daughters prove disloyal to the father.
Well, I will counsel him the best I can:
Would I were able to redress his wrong,
Yet what I can, unto my utmost power,
He shall be sure of to the latest hour. [*Exit.*

Scene II. *A room in the royal palace of Cornwall.*

Enter Gonorill *and* Skalliger.

Gon. I prithee, Skalliger, tell me what thou think'st:
Could any woman of our dignity
Endure such quips and peremptory taunts,
As I do daily from my doting father?
Doth't not suffice that I him keep of alms,
Who is not able for to keep himself?
But as if he were our better, he should think
To check and snap me up at every word.
I cannot make me a new fashion'd gown,
And set it forth with more than common cost;
But his old doting doltish wither'd wit,
Is sure to give a senseless check for it.
I cannot make a banquet extraordinary,
To grace myself, and spread my name abroad,
But he, old fool, is captious by and by,
And saith, the cost would well suffice for twice.
Judge then, I pray, what reason is't, that I

Should stand alone charg'd with his vain expense,
And that my sister Ragan should go free,
To whom he gave as much as unto me?
I prithee, Skalliger, tell me, if thou know,
By any means to rid me of this woe.
Skall. Your many favours still bestow'd on me,
Bind me in duty to advise your grace,
How you may soonest remedy this ill.
The large allowance which he hath from you,
Is that which makes him so forget himself:
Therefore abridge it half, and you shall see,
That having less, he will more thankful be:
For why, abundance maketh us forget
The fountains whence the benefits do spring.
Gon. Well, Skalliger, for thy kind advice herein,
I will not be ungrateful, if I live:
I have restrained half his portion already,
And I will presently restrain the other,
That having no means to relieve himself,
He may go seek elsewhere for better help. [*Exit.*
Skall. Go, viperous woman, shame to all thy sex:
The heavens, no doubt, will punish thee for this;
And me, a villain, that to curry favour,
Have given the daughter counsel 'gainst the father.
But us the world doth this experience give,
That he that cannot flatter, cannot live. [*Exit.*

Scene III. *A hall in the royal palace of Cornwall.*

Enter king of Cornwall, Leir, Perillus, *and nobles.*

Corn. Father, what aileth you to be so sad?
Methinks, you frolic not as you were wont.
Leir. The nearer we do grow unto our graves,
The less we do delight in worldly joys.
Corn. But if a man can frame himself to mirth,
It is a mean for to prolong his life.
Leir. Then welcome sorrow, Leir's only friend,
Who doth desire his troubled days had end.
Corn. Comfort yourself, father, here comes your daughter,
Who much will grieve, I know, to see you sad.

Enter Gonorill.

Leir. But more doth grieve, I fear, to see me live.
Corn. My Gonorill, you come in wished time,
To put your father from these pensive dumps.
In faith, I fear that all things go not well.
Gon. What, do you fear, that I have anger'd him?
Hath he complained of me unto my lord?
I'll provide him a piece of bread and cheese;
For in a time he'll practise nothing else,
Than carry tales from one unto another.
'Tis all his practice for to kindle strife,
'Twixt you, my lord, and me your loving wife:

But I will take an order, if I can,
To cease th' effect, where first the cause began.
Corn. Sweet, be not angry in a partial cause,
He ne'er complain'd of thee in all his life.
Father, you must not weigh a woman's words.
Leir. Alas, not I: poor soul, she breeds young bones,
And that is it makes her so touchy sure.
Gon. What, breeds young bones already! you will make
An honest woman of me then, belike.
O vild old wretch! who ever heard the like,
That seeketh thus his own child to defame?
Corn. I cannot stay to hear this discord sound. [*Exit.*
Gon. For any one that loves your company,
You may go pack, and seek some other place,
To sow the seed of discord and disgrace. [*Exit.*
Leir. Thus, say or do the best that e'er I can,
'Tis wrested straight into another sense:
This punishment my heavy sins deserve,
And more than this ten thousand thousand times:
Else aged Leir them could never find
Cruel to him, to whom he hath been kind.
Why do I over-live myself, to see
The course of nature quite revers'd in me?
Ah, gentle Death, if ever any wight
Did wish thy presence with a perfit zeal:
Then come, I pray thee, even with all my heart,
And end my sorrows with thy fatal dart. [*He weeps.*

Per. Ah, do not so disconsolate yourself,
Nor dew your aged cheeks with wasting tears.
Leir. What man art thou that takest any pity
Upon the worthless state of old Leir?
Per. One who doth bear as great a share of grief,
As if it were my dearest father's case.
Leir. Ah, good my friend, how ill art thou advis'd,
For to consort with miserable men:
Go learn to flatter, where thou may'st in time
Get favour 'mongst the mighty, and so climb:
For now I am so poor and full of want,
As that I ne'er can recompense thy love.
Per. What's got by flattery, doth not long endure;
And men in favour live not most secure.
My conscience tells me, if I should forsake you,
I were the hatefull'st excrement on the earth:
Which well do know, in course of former time,
How good my lord hath been to me and mine.
Leir. Did I ere raise thee higher than the rest
Of all thy ancestors which were before?
Per. I ne'er did seek it; but by your good grace,
I still enjoyed my own with quietness.
Leir. Did I ere give thee living, to increase
The due revenues which thy father left?
Per. I had enough, my lord, and having that,
What should you need to give me any more?
Leir. Oh, did I ever dispossess my self,

And give thee half my kingdom in good will?
Per. Alas, my lord, there were no reason, why
You should have such a thought, to give it me.
Leir. Nay, if thou talk of reason, then be mute;
For with good reason I can thee confute.
If they, which first by Nature's sacred law
Do owe to me the tribute of their lives;
If they to whom I always have been kind,
And bountiful beyond comparison;
If they, for whom I have undone myself,
And brought my age unto this extreme want,
Do now reject, contemn, despise, abhor me,
What reason moveth thee to sorrow for me?
Per. Where reason fails, let tears confirm my love,
And speak how much your passions do me move.
Ah, good my lord, condemn not all for one:
[You have two daughters left, to whom I know
You shall be welcome, if you please to go.]
Leir. Oh, how thy words add sorrow to my soul,
To think of my unkindness to Cordella!
Whom causeless I did dispossess of all.
Upon th' unkind suggestions of her sisters:
And for her sake, I think this heavy doom
Is fallen on me, and not without desert:
[Yet unto Ragan] was I always kind,
And gave to her the half of all I had:
It may be, if I should to her repair,

She would be kinder, and entreat me fair.
Per. No doubt she would, and practise ere't be long,
By force of arms for to redress your wrong.
Leir. Well, since thou dost advise me for to go,
I am resolv'd to try the worst of woe. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV. *A room in the royal palace of Cambria.*

Enter Ragan *sola.*

Ragan. How may I bless the hour of my nativity,
Which bodeth unto me such happy stars!
How may I thank kind Fortune, that vouchsafes
To all my actions such desir'd event!
I rule the king of Cambria as I please:
The states are all obedient to my will;
And look whate'er I say, it shall be so,
Not any one that dareth answer no.
My eldest sister lives in royal state,
And wanteth nothing fitting her degree:
Yet hath she such a cooling card withal,
As that her honey savoureth much of gall.
My father with her is quarter-master still,
And many times restrains her of her will:
But if he were with me, and serv'd me so,
I'd send him packing somewhere else to go.
I'd entertain him with such slender cost,
That he should quickly wish to change his host. [*Exit.*

SCENE V. *A room in the royal palace of Cornwall.*

Enter Cornwall, Gonorill, *and attendants.*

Corn. Ah, Gonorill, what dire unhappy chance
Hath sequester'd thy father from our presence,
That no report can yet be heard of him?
Some great unkindness hath been offer'd him,
Exceeding far the bounds of patience:
Else all the world shall never me persuade,
He would forsake us without notice made.

Gon. Alas, my lord, whom doth it touch so near,
Or who hath interest in this grief, but I,
Whom sorrow had brought to her longest home,
But that I know his qualities so well?
I know, he is but stolen upon my sister
At unawares, to see her how she fares,
And spend a little time with her, to note
How all things go, and how she likes her choice:
And when occasion serves, he'll steal from her,
And unawares return to us again.
Therefore, my lord, be frolic, and resolve
To see my father here again ere long.

Corn. I hope so too; but yet to be more sure,
I'll send a post immediately to know
Whether he be arrived there or no. [*Exit.*

Gon. But I will intercept the messenger,

And temper him before he doth depart
With sweet persuasions, and with sound rewards,
That his report shall ratify my speech,
And make my lord cease further to inquire.
If he be not gone to my sister's court,
As sure my mind presageth that he is,
He haply may, by travelling unknown ways,
Fall sick, and as a common passenger,
Be dead and buried: would God it were so well;
For then there were no more to do, but this,
He went away, and none knows where he is.
But say he be in Cambria with the king,
And there exclaim against me, as he will:
I know he is as welcome to my sister,
As water is into a broken ship.
Well, after him I'll send such thunderclaps
Of slander, scandal, and invented tales,
That all the blame shall be remov'd from me,
And unperceiv'd rebound upon himself.
Thus with one nail another I'll expel,
And make the world judge, that I us'd him well.

Enter the messenger that should go to Cambria, *with a letter in his hand.*

Gon. My honest friend, whither away so fast?
Mess. To Cambria, madam, with letters from the king.
Gon. To whom?

Mess. Unto your father, if he be there.

Gon. Let me see them. [*She opens them.*

Mess. Madam, I hope your grace will stand
Between me and my neck-verse, if I be
Call'd in question, for opening the king's letters.

Gon. 'Twas I that open'd them; it was not thou.

Mess. Ay, but you need not care; and so must I,
A handsome man, be quickly truss'd up,
And when a man's hang'd, all the world cannot save him.

Gon. He that hangs thee, were better hang his father,
Or that but hurts thee in the least degree,
I tell thee, we make great account of thee.

Mess. I am o'er-joy'd, I surfeit of sweet words:
Kind queen, had I a hundred lives, I would
Spend ninety-nine of them for you, for that word.

Gon. Ay, but thou would'st keep one life still,
And that's as many as thou art like to have.

Mess. That one life is not too dear for my good queen; this sword, this buckler, this head, this heart, these hands, arms, legs, tripes, bowels, and all the members else whatsoever, are at your dispose; use me, trust me, command me: if I fail in anything, tie me to a dung-cart, and make a scavenger's horse of me, and whip me so long as I have any skin on my back.

Gon. In token of further employment, take that.

[*Flings him a purse.*

Mess. A strong bond, a firm obligation, good in law, good

in law: if I keep not the condition, let my neck be the forfeiture of my negligence.

Gon. I like thee well, thou hast a good tongue.

Mess. And as bad a tongue, if it be set on it, as any oyster-wife at Billingsgate hath: why, I have made many of my neighbours forsake their houses with railing upon them, and go dwell elsewhere; and so by my means houses have been good cheap in our parish: my tongue being well whetted with choler, is more sharp than a razor of Palermo.

Gon. Oh, thou art a fit man for my purpose.

Mess. Commend me not, sweet queen, before you try me. As my deserts are, so do think of me.

Gon. Well said, then this is thy trial: instead of carrying the king's letters to my father, carry thou these letters to my sister, which contain matter quite contrary to the other: there shall she be given to understand, that my father hath detracted her, given out slanderous speeches against her; and that he hath most intolerably abused me, set my lord and me at variance, and made mutinies amongst the commons.

These things (although it be not so)
Yet thou must affirm them to be true,
With oaths and protestations as will serve
To drive my sister out of love with him,
And cause my will accomplished to be.
This do, thou win'st my favour for ever,
And makest a high way of preferment to thee
And all thy friends.

Mess. It sufficeth, conceit it is already done:
I will so tongue-whip him, that I will
Leave him as bare of credit, as a poulter
Leaves a cony, when she pulls off his skin.

Gon. Yet there is a further matter.

Mess. I thirst to hear it.

Gon. If my sister thinketh convenient, as my letters importeth, to make him away, hast thou the heart to effect it?

Mess. Few words are best in so small a matter:
These are but trifles. By this book I will.
[*Kisses the paper.*

Gon. About it presently, I long till it be done.

Mess. I fly, I fly. [*Exeunt.*

ACT IV

Scene I. *Outside a Church in Gallia.*

Enter Cordella *sola.*

Cor. I have been over-negligent to-day,
In going to the temple of my God,
To render thanks for all his benefits,
Which he miraculously hath bestow'd on me,
In raising me out of my mean estate,
Whenas I was devoid of worldly friends,

And placing me in such a sweet content,
As far exceeds the reach of my deserts.
My kingly husband, mirror of his time,
For zeal, for justice, kindness, and for care
To God, his subjects, me, and common weal,
By his appointment was ordained for me.
I cannot wish the thing that I do want;
I cannot want the thing but I may have,
Save only this which I shall ne'er obtain,
My father's love, oh, this I ne'er shall gain.
I would abstain from any nutriment,
And pine my body to the very bones:
Barefoot I would on pilgrimage set forth
Unto the furthest quarters of the earth,
And all my life-time would I sackcloth wear,
And mourning-wise pour dust upon my head:
So he but to forgive me once would please,
That his gray hairs might go to heaven in peace.
And yet I know not how I him offended,
Or wherein justly I have deserved blame.
Oh, sisters! you are much to blame in this,
It was not he, but you that did me wrong:
Yet God forgive both him, and you, and me;
Even as I do in perfit charity.
I will to church, and pray unto my Saviour,
That ere I die, I may obtain his favour. [*Exit.*

Scene II. *A road leading to the royal palace of Cambria.*

Enter Leir *and* Perillus *faintly.*

Per. Rest on me, my lord, and stay yourself,
The way seems tedious to your aged limbs.
Leir. Nay, rest on me, kind friend, and stay thyself,
Thou art as old as I, but more kind.
Per. Ah, good my lord, it ill befits, that I
Should lean upon the person of a king.
Leir. But it fits worse, that I should bring thee forth,
That had no cause to come along with me,
Through these uncouth paths, and tireful ways,
And never ease thy fainting limbs a whit.
Thou hast left all, ay, all to come with me,
And I, for all, have nought to guerdon thee.
Per. Cease, good my lord, to aggravate my woes
With these kind words, which cuts my heart in two,
To think your will should want the power to do.
Leir. Cease, good Perillus, for to call me lord,
And think me but the shadow of myself.
Per. That honourable title will I give
Unto my lord, so long as I do live.
Oh, be of comfort; for I see the place
Whereas your daughter keeps her residence.
And lo, in happy time the Cambrian prince
Is here arriv'd, to gratify our coming.

Enter the prince of Cambria, Ragan, *and nobles : look upon them, and whisper together.*

Leir. Were I best speak, or sit me down and die ?
I am asham'd to tell this heavy tale.
Per. Then let me tell it, if you please, my lord :
'Tis shame for them that were the cause thereof.
Cam. What two old men are those that seem so sad ?
Methinks, I should remember well their looks.
Ragan. No, I mistake not, sure it is my father :
I must dissemble kindness now of force.
She runneth to him, and kneels down, saying :
Father, I bid you welcome, full of grief,
To see your grace us'd thus unworthily,
And ill befitting for your reverend age,
To come on foot a journey so endurable.
Oh, what disaster chance hath been the cause,
To make your cheeks so hollow, spare and lean ?
He cannot speak for weeping : for God's love, come,
Let us refresh him with some needful things,
And at more leisure we may better know,
Whence springs the ground of this unlook'd-for woe.
Cam. Come, father, ere we any further talk,
You shall refresh you after this weary walk.
[*Exeunt, manet* Ragan.
Ragan. Comes he to me with finger in the eye,
To tell a tale against my sister here ?

Whom I do know, he greatly hath abus'd:
And now like a contentious crafty wretch,
He first begins for to complain himself,
Whenas himself is in the greatest fault?
I'll not be partial in my sister's cause,
Nor yet believe his doting vain reports;
Who for a trifle (safely) I dare say,
Upon a spleen is stolen thence away:
And here (forsooth) he hopeth to have harbour,
And to be moan'd and made on like a child:
But ere't be long, his coming he shall curse,
And truly say, he came from bad to worse:
Yet will I make fair weather, to procure
Convenient means, and then I'll strike it sure. [*Exit.*

SCENE III. *Outside the royal palace of Cambria.*
Enter Messenger solus.

Mess. Now happily I am arrived here,
Before the stately palace of the Cambrian king:
If Leir be here safe-seated, and in rest,
To rouse him from it I will do my best.

Enter Ragan.

Now bags of gold, your virtue is (no doubt)
To make me in my message bold and stout.
The King of heaven preserve your Majesty,

And send your highness everlasting reign.

Ragan. Thanks, good my friend; but what imports thy message?

Mess. Kind greetings from the Cornwall queen:
The residue these letters will declare. [*She opens the letters.*

Ragan. How fares our royal sister?

Mess. I did leave her, at my parting, in good health.
[*She reads the letters, frowns, and stamps.*

See how her colour comes and goes again,
Now red as scarlet, now as pale as ash:
See how she knits her brow, and bites her lips,
And stamps, and makes a dumb show of disdain,
Mix'd with revenge, and violent extremes.
Here will be more work and more crowns for me.

Ragan. Alas, poor soul, and hath he used her thus?
And is he now come hither, with intent
To set divorce betwixt my lord and me?
Doth he give out that he doth hear report,
That I do rule my husband as I list,
And therefore means to alter so the case,
That I shall know my lord to be my head?
Well, it were best for him to take good heed,
Or I will make him hop without a head,
For his presumption, dotard that he is.
In Cornwall he hath made such mutinies,
First, setting of the king against the queen;
Then stirring up the commons 'gainst the king;

That had he there continued any longer,
He had been call'd in question for his fact.
So upon that occasion thence he fled,
And comes thus slyly stealing unto us:
And now already since his coming hither,
My lord and he are grown in such a league,
That I can have no conference with his grace:
I fear, he doth already intimate
Some forged cavillations 'gainst my state:
'Tis therefore best to cut him off in time,
Lest slanderous rumours once abroad dispers'd,
It is too late for them to be revers'd.
Friend, as the tenour of these letters shews,
My sister puts great confidence in thee.
Mess. She never yet committed trust to me,
But that, I hope, she found me always faithful:
So will I be to any friend of hers,
That hath occasion to employ my help.
Ragan. Hast thou the heart to act a stratagem,
And give a stab or two, if need require?
Mess. I have a heart compact of adamant,
Which never knew what melting pity meant.
I weigh no more the murd'ring of a man,
Than I respect the cracking of a flea,
When I do catch her biting on my skin.
If you will have your husband or your father,
Or both of them sent to another world,

Do but command me do't, it shall be done.
Ragan. It is enough, we make no doubt of thee:
Meet us tomorrow here, at nine o'clock:
Meanwhile, farewell, and drink that for my sake. [*Exit.*
Mess. Ay, this is it will make me do the deed:
Oh, had I every day such customers,
This were the gainfull'st trade in Christendom!
A purse of gold giv'n for a paltry stab.
Why, here's a wench that longs to have a stab.
Well, I could give it her, and ne'er hurt her neither.

Scene IV. *A room in the royal palace of Gallia.*

Enter the Gallian *king, and* Cordella.

King. When will these clouds of sorrow once disperse,
And smiling joy triumph upon thy brow?
When will this scene of sadness have an end,
And pleasant acts ensue, to move delight?
When will my lovely queen cease to lament,
And take some comfort to her grieved thoughts?
If of thyself thou deign'st to have no care,
Yet pity me, whom thy grief makes despair.
Cor. Oh, grieve not you, my lord, you have no cause;
Let not my passions move your mind a whit:
For I am bound by nature to lament
For his ill will, that life to me first lent.

If so the stock be dried with disdain,
Wither'd and sere the branch must needs remain.
King. But thou art now graft in another stock ;
I am the stock, and thou the lovely branch :
And from my root continual sap shall flow,
To make thee flourish with perpetual spring.
Forget thy father and thy kindred now,
Since they forsake thee like inhuman beasts ;
Think they are dead, since all their kindness dies,
And bury them, where black oblivion lies.
Think not thou art the daughter of old Leir,
Who did unkindly disinherit thee :
But think thou art the noble Gallian queen,
And wife to him that dearly loveth thee :
Embrace the joys that present with thee dwell,
Let sorrow pack and hide herself in hell.
Cor. Not that I miss my country or my kin,
My old acquaintance or my ancient friends,
Doth any whit distemperate my mind,
Knowing you, which are more dear to me
Than country, kin, and all things else can be.
Yet pardon me, my gracious lord, in this :
For what can stop the course of Nature's power ?
As easy is it for four-footed beasts,
To stay themselves upon the liquid air,
And mount aloft into the element,
And overstrip the feather'd fowls in flight :

As easy is it for the slimy fish,
To live and thrive without the help of water:
As easy is it for the blackamoor,
To wash the tawny colour from his skin,
Which all oppose against the course of nature:
As I am able to forget my father.

King. Mirror of virtue, Phœnix of our age!
Too kind a daughter for an unkind father,
Be of good comfort; for I will dispatch
Ambassadors immediately for Britain,
Unto the king of Cornwall's court, whereas
Your father keepeth now his residence,
And in the kindest manner him entreat,
That, setting former grievances apart,
He will be pleas'd to come and visit us.
If no entreaty will suffice the turn,
I'll offer him the half of all my crown:
If that moves not, we'll furnish out a fleet,
And sail to Cornwall for to visit him;
And there you shall be firmly reconcil'd
In perfit love, as erst you were before.

Cor. Where tongue cannot sufficient thanks afford,
The King of heaven remunerate my lord.

King. Only be blithe and frolic, sweet, with me;
This and much more I'll do to comfort thee.

Scene V. *A room in the royal palace of Cambria.*

Enter Messenger solus.

Mess. It is a world to see now I am flush,
How many friends I purchase everywhere!
How many seeks to creep into my favour,
And kiss their hands, and bend their knees to me!
No more, here comes the queen, now shall I know her mind,
And hope for to derive more crowns from her.

Enter Ragan.

Ragan. My friend, I see thou mind'st thy promise well,
And art before me here, methinks to-day.
Mess. I am a poor man, and it like your grace;
But yet I always love to keep my word.
Ragan. Well, keep thy word with me, and thou shall see,
That of a poor man I will make thee rich.
Mess. I long to hear it, it might have been dispatch'd
If you had told me of it yesternight.
Ragan. It is a thing of right strange consequence,
And well I cannot utter it in words.
Mess. It is more strange, that I am not by this
Beside myself, with longing for to hear it.
Were it to meet the devil in his den,
And try a bout with him for a scratch'd face,
I'd undertake it, if you would but bid me.

Ragan. Ah, good my friend, that I should have thee do
Is such a thing as I do shame to speak ;
Yet it must needs be done.

Mess. I'll speak it for thee, queen : shall I kill thy father?
I know 'tis that ; and if it be so, say.

Ragan. Ay.

Mess. Why, that's enough.

Ragan. And yet that is not all.

Mess. What else?

Ragan. Thou must kill that old man that came with him.

Mess. Here are two hands, for each of them is one.

Ragan. And for each hand here is a recompense.

[*Gives him two purses.*

Mess. Oh, that I had ten hands by miracle!
I could tear ten in pieces with my teeth,
So in my mouth you'ld put a purse of gold.
But in what manner must it be effected?

Ragan. Tomorrow morning ere the break of day,
I by a wile will send them to the thicket,
That is about some two miles from the court,
And promise them to meet them there myself,
Because I must have private conference,
About some news I have receiv'd from Cornwall.
This is enough, I know, they will not fail,
And then be ready for to play thy part :
Which done, thou may'st right easily escape,
And no man once mistrust thee for the fact :

But yet, before thou prosecute the act,
Shew him the letter, which my sister sent,
There let him read his own indictment first,
And then proceed to execution:
But see thou faint not; for they will speak fair.
Mess. Could he speak words as pleasing as the pipe
Of Mercury, which charm'd the hundred eyes
Of watchful Argus, and enforc'd him sleep:
Yet here are words so pleasing to my thoughts,
[*To the purse.*
As quite shall take away the sound of his. [*Exit.*
Ragan. About it then, and when thou hast dispatch'd,
I'll find a means to send thee after him. [*Exit.*

Scene VI. *A room in the royal palace of Cornwall.*

Enter Cornwall *and* Gonorill.

Corn. I wonder that the messenger doth stay,
Whom we dispatch'd for Cambria so long since:
If that his answer do not please us well,
And he do shew good reason for delay,
I'll teach him how to dally with his king,
And to detain us in such long suspense.
Gon. My lord, I think the reason may be this:
My father means to come along with him;
And therefore 'tis his pleasure he shall stay,
For to attend upon him on the way.

Corn. It may be so, and therefore till I know
The truth thereof, I will suspend my judgment.

Enter Servant.

Serv. And't like your grace, there is an ambassador
Arrived from Gallia, and craves admittance to your majesty.
Corn. From Gallia? what should his message
Hither import? is not your father haply
Gone thither? well, whatsoe'er it be,
Bid him come in, he shall have audience.

Enter Ambassador.

What news from Gallia? speak, ambassador.
Amb. The noble king and queen of Gallia first salutes,
By me, their honourable father, my lord Leir:
Next, they commend them kindly to your graces,
As those whose welfare they entirely wish.
Letters I have to deliver to my lord Leir,
And presents too, if I might speak with him.
Gon. If you might speak with him? why, do you think,
We are afraid that you should speak with him?
Amb. Pardon me, madam; for I think not so,
But say so only 'cause he is not here.
Corn. Indeed, my friend, upon some urgent cause,
He is at this time absent from the court:
But if a day or two you here repose,
'Tis very likely you shall have him here,

Or else have certain notice where he is.

Gon. Are not we worthy to receive your message?

Amb. I had in charge to do it to himself.

Gon. It may be then 'twill not be done in haste.

[*To herself.*

How doth my sister brook the air of France?

Amb. Exceeding well, and never sick one hour,
Since first she set her foot upon the shore.

Gon. I am the more sorry.

Amb. I hope not so, madam.

Gon. Did'st thou not say, that she was ever sick,
Since the first hour that she arrived there?

Amb. No, madam, I said quite contrary.

Gon. Then I mistook thee.

Corn. Then she is merry, if she have her health?

Amb. Oh no, her grief exceeds, until the time
That she be reconcil'd unto her father.

Gon. God continue it.

Amb. What, madam?

Gon. Why, her health.

Amb. Amen to that: but God release her grief,
And send her father in a better mind,
Than to continue always so unkind.

Corn. I'll be a mediator in her cause,
And seek all means to expiate his wrath.

Amb. Madam, I hope your grace will do the like.

Gon. Should I be a mean to exasperate his wrath

Against my sister, whom I love so dear? no, no.
Amb. To expiate or mitigate his wrath:
For he hath misconceiv'd without a cause.
Gon. Oh, ay, what else?
Amb. 'Tis pity it should be so; would it were otherwise.
Gon. It were great pity it should be otherwise.
Amb. Than how, madam?
Gon. Than that they should be reconcil'd again.
Amb. It shews you bear an honourable mind.
Gon. It shews thy understanding to be blind,
And that thou hadst need of an interpreter:
[*Speaks to herself.*
Well, I will know thy message ere't be long,
And find a mean to cross it, if I can.
Corn. Come in, my friend, and frolic in our court,
Till certain notice of my father come. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VII. *In the open country of Cambria.*

Enter Leir *and* Perillus.

Per. My lord, you are up to-day before your hour,
'Tis news to you to be abroad so rathe.
Leir. 'Tis news indeed, I am so extreme heavy,
That I can scarcely keep my eye-lids open.
Per. And so am I, but I impute the cause
To rising sooner than we use to do.
Leir. Hither my daughter means to come disguis'd:

I'll sit me down, and read until she come.

[*Pulls out a book, and sits down.*

Per. She'll not be long, I warrant you, my lord:
But say, a couple of these they call good fellows
Should step out of a hedge, and set upon us,
We were in good case for to answer them.

Leir. 'Twere not for us to stand upon our hands.

Per. I fear, we scant should stand upon our legs.
But how should we do to defend ourselves?

Leir. Even pray to God, to bless us from their hands:
For fervent prayer much ill hap withstands.

Per. I'll sit and pray with you for company;
Yet was I ne'er so heavy in my life. [*They fall both asleep.*

Enter the Messenger, or murderer, with two daggers in his hands.

Mess. Were it not a mad jest, if two or three of my profession should meet me, and lay me down in a ditch, and play rob thief with me, and perforce take my gold away from me, whilst I act this stratagem, and by this means the grey-beards should escape? Faith, when I were at liberty again, I would make no more to do, but go to the next tree, and there hang myself. [*Sees them, and starts.*
But stay, methinks, my youths are here already,
And with pure zeal have prayed themselves asleep.
I think, they know to what intent they came,
And are provided for another world.

[*He takes their books away.*

Now could I stab them bravely, while they sleep,
And in a manner put them to no pain;
And doing so, I shewed them mighty friendship:
For fear of death is worse than death itself.
But that my sweet queen will'd me for to shew
This letter to them, ere I did the deed.
Mass, they begin to stir: I'll stand aside;
So shall I come upon them unawares. [*They wake and rise.*
Leir. I marvel, that my daughter stays so long.
Per. I fear, we did mistake the place, my lord.
Leir. God grant we do not miscarry in the place:
I had a short nap, but so full of dread,
As much amazeth me to think thereof.
Per. Fear not, my lord, dreams are but fantasies,
And slight imaginations of the brain.
Mess. Persuade him so, but I'll make him and you
Confess, that dreams do often prove too true.
Per. I pray, my lord, what was the effect of it?
I may go near to guess what it pretends.
Mess. Leave that to me, I will expound the dream.
Leir. Methought my daughters, Gonorill and Ragan,
Stood both before me with such grim aspects,
Each brandishing a falchion in their hand,
Ready to lop a limb off where it fell,
And in their other hand a naked poniard,
Wherewith they stabb'd me in a hundred places,
And to their thinking left me there for dead:

But then my youngest daughter, fair Cordella,
Came with a box of balsam in her hand,
And poured it into my bleeding wounds;
By whose good means I was recover'd well,
In perfit health, as erst I was before:
And with the fear of this I did awake,
And yet for fear my feeble joints do quake.

Mess. I'll make you quake for something presently.
Stand, stand. [*They reel.*

Leir. We do, my friend, although with much ado.

Mess. Deliver, deliver.

Per. Deliver us, good Lord, from such as he.

Mess. You should have prayed before, while it was time,
And then perhaps, you might have 'scap'd my hands:
But you, like faithful watch-men, fell asleep,
The whilst I came and took your halberds from you.
[*Shews their books.*
And now you want your weapons of defence,
How have you any hope to be deliver'd?
This comes, because you have no better stay,
But fall asleep, when you should watch and pray.

Leir. My friend, thou seem'st to be a proper man.

Mess. 'Sblood, how the old slave claws me by the elbow?
He thinks, belike, to 'scape by scraping thus.

Per. And it may be, are in some need of money.

Mess. That to be false, behold my evidence.
[*Shows his purses.*

Leir. If that I have will do thee any good,
I give it thee, even with a right good will.
[*The messenger takes it.*
Per. Here, take mine too, and wish with all my heart,
To do thee pleasure, it were twice as much.
[*The messenger takes his, and weighs them both in his hands.*
Mess. I'll none of them, they are too light for me.
[*Puts them in his pocket.*
Leir. Why then farewell : and if thou have occasion
In any thing, to use me to the queen,
'Tis like enough that I can pleasure thee. [*They proffer to go.*
Mess. Do you hear, do you hear, sir?
If I had occasion to use you to the queen,
Would you do one thing for me I should ask?
Leir. Ay, anything that lies within my power.
Here is my hand upon it, so farewell. [*Proffers to go.*
Mess. Hear you, sir, hear you? pray, a word with you.
Methinks, a comely honest ancient man
Should not dissemble with one for a vantage.
I know, when I shall come to try this gear
You will recant from all that you have said.
Per. Mistrust not him, but try him when thou wilt:
He is her father, therefore may do much.
Mess. I know he is, and therefore mean to try him :
You are his friend too, I must try you both.
Ambo. Prithee do, prithee do. [*Proffer to go out.*
Mess. Stay grey-beards then, and prove men of your words:

The queen hath tied me by a solemn oath,
Here in this place to see you both dispatch'd:
Now for the safeguard of my conscience,
Do me the pleasure for to kill yourselves:
So shall you save me labour for to do it,
And prove yourselves true old men of your words.
And here I vow in sight of all the world,
I ne'er will trouble you whilst I live again.

Leir. Affright us not with terror, good my friend,
Nor strike such fear into our aged hearts.
Play not the cat, which dallieth with the mouse;
And on a sudden maketh her a prey:
But if thou art mark'd for the man of death
To me and to my Damon, tell me plain,
That we may be prepared for the stroke,
And make ourselves fit for the world to come.

Mess. I am the last of any mortal race,
That e'er your eyes are likely to behold,
And hither sent of purpose to this place,
To give a final period to your days,
Which are so wicked, and have liv'd so long,
That your own children seek to short your life.

Leir. Cam'st thou from France, of purpose to do this?

Mess. From France? zoones, do I look like a Frenchman? Sure I have not mine own face on; somebody hath chang'd faces with me, and I know not of it: but I am sure, my apparel is all English. Sirrah, what meanest thou to ask

that question? I could spoil the fashion of this face for anger. A French face!

Leir. Because my daughter, whom I have offended,
And at whose hands I have deserv'd as ill,
As ever any father did of child,
Is queen of France, no thanks at all to me,
But unto God, who my injustice see.
If it be so that she doth seek revenge,
As with good reason she may justly do,
I will most willingly resign my life,
A sacrifice to mitigate her ire:
I never will entreat thee to forgive,
Because I am unworthy for to live.
Therefore speak soon, and I will soon make speed;
Whether Cordella will'd thee do this deed?

Mess. As I am a perfit gentleman, thou speakest French to me:
I never heard Cordella's name before,
Nor never was in France in all my life:
I never knew thou hadst a daughter there,
To whom thou did'st prove so unkind a churl:
But thy own tongue declares that thou hast been
A vile old wretch, and full of heinous sin.

Leir. Ah, no, my friend, thou art deceived much:
For her except, whom I confess I wrong'd,
Through doting frenzy, and o'er-jealous love,
There lives not any under heaven's bright eye,

That can convict me of impiety :
And therefore sure thou dost mistake the mark :
For I am in true peace with all the world.
Mess. You are the fitter for the King of heaven :
And therefore, for to rid thee of suspense,
Know thou, the queens of Cambria and Cornwall,
Thy own two daughters, Gonorill and Ragan,
Appointed me to massacre thee here.
Why, wouldst thou then persuade me that thou art
In charity with all the world but now,
When thy own issue hold thee in such hate
That they have hired me to abridge thy fate ?
Oh, fie upon such vile dissembling breath,
That would deceive, even at the point of death.
Per. Am I awake, or is it but a dream ?
Mess. Fear nothing, man, thou art but in a dream,
And thou shalt never wake until doomsday ;
By then, I hope, thou wilt have slept enough.
Leir. Yet, gentle friend, grant one thing ere I die.
Mess. I'll grant you anything, except your lives.
Leir. Oh, but assure me by some certain token,
That my two daughters hired thee to this deed :
If I were once resolv'd of that, then I
Would wish no longer life, but crave to die.
Mess. That to be true, in sight of heaven I swear.
Leir. Swear not by heaven, for fear of punishment :
The heavens are guiltless of such heinous acts.

Mess. I swear by earth, the mother of us all.

Leir. Swear not by earth: for she abhors to bear
Such bastards, as are murderers of her sons.

Mess. Why then, by hell, and all the devils I swear.

Leir. Swear not by hell; for that stands gaping wide,
To swallow thee, and if thou do this deed.

[*Thunder and Lightning.*

Mess. I would that word were in his belly again,
It hath frighted me even to the very heart;
This old man is some strong magician:
His words have turn'd my mind from this exploit.
Then neither heaven, earth, nor hell, be witness;
But let this paper witness for them all.

[*Shews* Gonorill's *letter.*

Shall I relent, or shall I prosecute?
Shall I resolve, or were I best recant?
I will not crack my credit with two queens,
To whom I have already pass'd my word.
Oh, but my conscience for this act doth tell,
I get heaven's hate, earth's scorn, and pains of hell.

[*They bless themselves.*

Per. O just Jehovah, whose almighty power
Doth govern all things in this spacious world,
How canst thou suffer such outrageous acts
To be committed without just revenge?
O viperous generation and accurst,
To seek his blood, whose blood did make them first!

Leir. Ah, my true friend in all extremity,
Let us submit us to the will of God :
Things past all sense, let us not seek to know ;
It is God's will, and therefore must be so.
My friend, I am prepared for the stroke :
Strike when thou wilt, and I forgive thee here,
Even from the very bottom of my heart.
Mess. But I am not prepared for to strike.
Leir. Farewell, Perillus, even the truest friend,
That ever lived in adversity :
The latest kindness I'll request of thee,
Is that thou go unto my daughter Cordella,
And carry her her father's latest blessing :
Withal desire her, that she will forgive me ;
For I have wrong'd her without any cause.
Now, Lord, receive me, for I come to thee,
And die, I hope, in perfit charity.
Dispatch, I pray thee, I have liv'd too long.
Mess. I, but you are unwise, to send an errand
By him that never meaneth to deliver it :
Why, he must go along with you to heaven :
It were not good you should go all alone.
Leir. No doubt, he shall, when by the course of nature,
He must surrender up his due to death :
But that time shall not come till God permit.
Mess. Nay, presently, to bear you company.
I have a passport for him in my pocket,

Already seal'd, and he must needs ride post.
[*Shews a bag of money.*

Leir. The letter which I read, imports not so,
It only toucheth me; no word of him.

Mess. Ay, but the queen commands it must be so,
And I am paid for him, as well as you.

Per. I, who have borne you company in life,
Most willingly will bear a share in death.
It skilleth not for me, my friend, a whit,
Nor for a hundred such as thou and I.

Mess. Marry, but it doth, sir, by your leave; your good days are past: though it be no matter for you, 'tis a matter for me; proper men are not so rife.

Per. Oh, but beware, how thou dost lay thy hand
Upon the high anointed of the Lord:
Oh, be advised ere thou dost begin:
Dispatch me straight, but meddle not with him.

Leir. Friend, thy commission is to deal with me,
And I am he that hath deserved all:
The plot was laid to take away my life:
And here it is, I do entreat thee take it:
Yet for my sake, and as thou art a man,
Spare this my friend, that hither with me came:
I brought him forth, whereas he had not been,
But for good will to bear me company.
He left his friends, his country, and his goods,
And came with me in most extremity.

Oh, if he should miscarry here and die,
Who is the cause of it, but only I?
Mess. Why that am I, let that ne'er trouble thee.
Leir. Oh no, 'tis I. Oh, had I now to give thee
The monarchy of all the spacious world
To save his life, I would bestow it on thee:
But I have nothing but these tears and prayers,
And the submission of a bended knee. [*Kneels.*
Oh, if all this to mercy move thy mind,
Spare him, in heaven thou shalt like mercy find.
Mess. I am as hard to be mov'd as another, and yet methinks the strength of their persuasions stirs me a little.
Per. My friend, if fear of the almighty power
Have power to move thee, we have said enough;
But if thy mind be moveable with gold,
We have not presently to give it thee:
Yet to thyself thou may'st do greater good,
To keep thy hands still undefil'd from blood:
For do but well consider with thyself,
When thou hast finish'd this outrageous act,
What horror still will haunt thee for the deed:
Think this again, that they which would incense
Thee for to be the butcher of their father,
When it is done, for fear it should be known,
Would make a means to rid thee from the world:
Oh, then art thou for ever tied in chains
Of everlasting torments to endure,

Even in the hottest hole of grisly hell,
Such pains, as never mortal tongue can tell.

[*It thunders. He quakes, and lets fall the dagger next to* Perillus.

Leir. O, heavens be thanked, he will spare my friend.
Now, when thou wilt, come make an end of me.

[*He lets fall the other dagger.*

Per. Oh, happy fight! he means to save my lord.
The king of heaven continue this good mind.

Leir. Why stay'st thou to do execution?

Mess. I am as wilful as you for your life:
I will not do it, now you do entreat me.

Per. Ah, now I see thou hast some spark of grace.

Mess. Beshrew you for it, you have put it in me:
The parlousest old men, that e'er I heard.
Well, to be flat, I'll not meddle with you:
Here I found you, and here I'll leave you:
If any ask you why the case so stands?
Say that your tongues were better than your hands.

[*Exit Messenger.*

Per. Farewell. If ever we together meet,
It shall go hard, but I will thee regreet.
Courage, my lord, the worst is overpast:
Let us give thanks to God, and hie us hence.

Leir. Thou art deceiv'd; for I am past the best,
And know not whither for to go from hence:
Death had been better welcome unto me,

Than longer life to add more misery.

Per. It were not good to return from whence we came,
Unto your daughter Ragan back again.
Now let us go to France, unto Cordella,
Your youngest daughter; doubtless she will succour you.

Leir. Oh, how can I persuade myself of that,
Since the other two are quite devoid of love;
To whom I was so kind, as that my gifts
Might make them love me, if 'twere nothing else?

Per. No worldly gifts, but grace from God on high,
Doth nourish virtue and true charity.
Remember well what words Cordella spake,
What time you ask'd her, how she lov'd your grace,
She said, her love unto you was as much,
As ought a child to bear unto her father.

Leir. But she did find, my love was not to her,
As should a father bear unto a child.

Per. That makes not her love to be any less,
If she do love you as a child should do:
You have tried two, try one more for my sake,
I'll ne'er entreat you further trial make.
Remember well the dream you had of late,
And think what comfort it foretells to us.

Leir. Come, truest friend that ever man possess'd,
I know thou counsell'st all things for the best:
If this third daughter play a kinder part,
It comes of God, and not of my desert. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VIII. *Outside the royal palace of Cornwall.*

Enter the Gallian Ambassador *solus.*

Amb. There is of late news come unto the court,
That old lord Leir remains in Cambria:
I'll hie me thither presently, to impart
My letters and my message unto him.
I never was less welcome to a place
In all my life-time, than I have been hither,
Especially unto the stately queen,
Who would not cast one gracious look on me,
But still with low'ring and suspicious eyes,
Would take exceptions at each word I spake;
And fain she would have undermined me,
To know what my ambassage did import.
But she is like to hop without her hope,
And in this matter for to want her will,
Though, by report, she'll have't in all things else.
Well, I will post away for Cambria:
Within these few days I hope to be there. [*Exit.*

ACT V.

Scene I. *A room in the royal palace of Gallia.*

Enter the king *and* queen *of* Gallia, *and* Mumford.

King. By this, our father understands our mind,
And our kind greetings sent to him of late:

Therefore my mind presageth ere't be long,
We shall receive from Britain happy news.
Cor. I fear my sister will dissuade his mind;
For she to me hath always been unkind.
King. Fear not, my love, since that we know the worst,
The last means helps, if that we miss the first:
If he'll not come to Gallia unto us,
Then we will sail to Britain unto him.
Mum. Well, if I once see Britain again,
I have sworn, I'll ne'er come home without my wench,
And I'll not be forsworn;
I'll rather never come home while I live.
Cor. Are you sure, Mumord, she is a maid still?
Mum. Nay, I'll not swear she is a maid, but she goes for one:
I'll take her at all adventures, if I can get her.
Cor. Ay, that's well put in.
Mum. Well put in? nay, it was ill put in; for had it
Been as well put in, as e'er I put in, in my days,
I would have made her follow me to France.
Cor. Nay, you'd have been so kind, as take her with you,
Or else, were I as she,
I would have been so loving, as I'd stay behind you:
Yet I must confess, you are a very proper man,
And able to make a wench do more than she would do.
Mum. Well, I have a pair of slops for the nonce,
Will hold all your mocks.
King. Nay, we see you have a handsome hose.

Cor. Ay, and of the newest fashion.

Mum. More bobs, more: put them in still,
They'll serve instead of bombast, yet put not in too many, lest the seams crack, and they fly out amongst you again: you must not think to outface me so easily in my mistress' quarrel, who if I see once again, ten team of horses shall not draw me away, till I have full and whole possession.

King. Ay, but one team and a cart will serve the turn.

Cor. Not only for him, but also for his wench.

Mum. Well, you are two to one, I'll give you over:
And since I see you so pleasantly disposed,
Which indeed is but seldom seen, I'll claim
A promise of you, which you shall not deny me:
For promise is debt, and by this hand you promis'd it me.
Therefore you owe it me, and you shall pay it me,
Or I'll sue you upon an action of unkindness.

King. Prithee, lord Mumford, what promise did I make thee?

Mum. Faith, nothing but this,
That the next fair weather, which is very now,
You would go in progress down to the sea side,
Which is very near.

King. Faith, in this motion I will join with thee,
And be a mediator to my queen.
Prithee, my love, let this match go forward,
My mind foretells, 'twill be a lucky voyage.

Cor. Entreaty needs not, where you may command,
So you be pleased, I am right well content;

Yet, as the sea I much desire to see;
So am I most unwilling to be seen.
King. We'll go disguised, all unknown to any.
Cor. Howsoever you make one, I'll make another.
Mum. And I the third: oh, I am over-joy'd!
[See what love is, which getteth with a word,
What all the world besides could ne'er obtain:]
But what disguises shall we have, my lord?
King. Faith thus: my queen and I will be disguis'd,
Like a plain country couple, and you shall be Roger
Our man, and wait upon us: or if you will,
You shall go first, and we will wait on you.
Mum. 'Twere more than time; this device is excellent.
Come let us about it. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II. *A room in the royal palace of Cambria.*

Enter Cambria *and* Ragan *with nobles.*

Cam. What strange mischance or unexpected hap
Hath thus depriv'd us of our father's presence?
Can no man tell us what's become of him,
With whom we did converse not two days since?
My lords, let everywhere light horse be sent,
And scour about through all our regiment.
Dispatch a post immediately to Cornwall,
To see if any news be of him there;
Myself will make a strict inquiry here,

And all about our cities near at hand,
Till certain news of his abode be brought.
Ragan. All sorrow is but counterfeit to mine,
Whose lips are almost sealed up with grief:
Mine is the substance, whilst they do but seem
To weep the loss, which tears cannot redeem.
Oh, ne'er was heard so strange a misadventure,
A thing so far beyond the reach of sense,
Since no man's reason in the cause can enter.
What hath remov'd my father thus from hence?
Oh, I do fear some charm or invocation
Of wicked spirits, or infernal fiends,
Stirr'd by Cordella, moves this innovation,
And brings my father timeless to his end.
But might I know, that the detested witch
Were certain cause of this uncertain ill,
Myself to France would go in some disguise,
And with these nails scratch out her hateful eyes:
For since I am deprived of my father,
I loathe my life, and wish my death the rather.
Cam. The heavens are just, and hate impiety,
And will, no doubt, reveal such heinous crimes:
Censure not any, till you know the right:
Let him be judge, that bringeth truth to light.
Ragan. Oh, but my grief, like to a swelling tide,
Exceeds the bounds of common patience:
Nor can I moderate my tongue so much,

To conceal them, whom I hold in suspect.
Cam. This matter shall be sifted: if it be she,
A thousand Frances shall not harbour her.

Enter the Gallian Ambassador.

Amb. All happiness unto the Cambrian king.
Cam. Welcome, my friend, from whence is thy ambassage?
Amb. I came from Gallia, unto Cornwall sent,
With letters to your honourable father,
Whom there not finding, as I did expect,
I was directed hither to repair.
Ragan. Frenchman, what is thy message to my father?
Amb. My letters, madam, will import the same,
Which my commission is for to deliver.
Ragan. In his absence you may trust us with your letters.
Amb. I must perform my charge in such a manner,
As I have strict commandment from the king.
Ragan. There is good packing 'twixt your king and you;
You need not hither come to ask for him,
You know where he is better than ourselves.
Amb. Madam, I hope not far off.
Ragan. Hath the young murd'ress, your outrageous queen,
No means to colour her detested deeds,
In finishing my guiltless father's days,
(Because he gave her nothing to her dower)
But by the colour of a feign'd ambassage,
To send him letters hither to our court?

Go carry them to them that sent them hither,
And bid them keep their scrolls unto themselves:
They cannot blind us with such slight excuse,
To smother up so monstrous vild abuse.
And were it not, it is 'gainst law of arms,
To offer violence to a messenger,
We would inflict such torments on thyself,
As should enforce thee to reveal the truth.
Amb. Madam, your threats no whit appal my mind,
I know my conscience guiltless of this act;
My king and queen, I dare be sworn, are free
From any thought of such impiety:
And therefore, madam, you have done them wrong,
And ill beseeming with a sister's love,
Who in mere duty tender him as much,
As ever you respected him for dower.
The king your husband will not say as much.
Cam. I will suspend my judgment for a time,
Till more appearance give us further light:
Yet to be plain, your coming doth enforce
A great suspicion to our doubtful mind,
And that you do resemble, to be brief,
Him that first robs, and then cries, 'Stop the thief.'
Amb. Pray God some near you have not done the like.
Ragan. Hence, saucy mate, reply no more to us;
[*She strikes him.*
For law of arms shall not protect thy tongue.

Amb. Ne'er was I offer'd such discourtesy;
God and my king, I trust, ere it be long,
Will find a mean to remedy this wrong.
[*Exit Ambassador.*

Ragan. How shall I live, to suffer this disgrace,
At every base and vulgar peasant's hands?
It ill befitteth my imperial state,
To be thus us'd, and no man take my part. [*She weeps.*

Cam. What should I do? infringe the law of arms,
Were to my everlasting obloquy:
But I will take revenge upon his master,
Which sent him hither, to delude us thus.

Ragan. Nay, if you put up this, be sure, ere long,
Now that my father thus is made away;
She'll come and claim a third part of your crown,
As due unto her by inheritance.

Cam. But I will prove her title to be nought
But shame, and the reward of parricide;
And make her an example to the world,
For after-ages to admire her penance.
This will I do, as I am Cambria's king,
Or lose my life, to prosecute revenge.
Come, first let's learn what news is of our father,
And then proceed, as best occasion fits. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III. *A port on the coast of Gallia.*

Enter Leir, Perillus, *and two mariners in sea-gowns and sea-caps.*

Per. My honest friends, we are asham'd to shew
The great extremity of our present state,
In that at this time we are brought so low,
That we want money for to pay our passage.
The truth is so, we met with some good fellows,
A little before we came aboard your ship,
Which stripp'd us quite of all the coin we had,
And left us not a penny in our purses:
Yet wanting money, we will use the mean,
To see you satisfied to the uttermost.

First Mar. Here's a good gown; 'twould become me passing well, [*Looks on* Leir.
I should be fine in it.

Second Mar. Here's a good cloak, I marvel how I should look in it. [*Looks on* Perillus.

Leir. Faith, had we others to supply their room,
Though ne'er so mean, you willingly should have them.

First Mar. Do you hear, sir? you look like an honest man; I'll not stand to do you a pleasure: here's a good strong motley gaberdine, cost me fourteen good shillings at Billingsgate; give me your gown for it, and your cap for mine, and I'll forgive your passage.

Leir. With all my heart, and twenty thanks.

[Leir *and he change.*

Second Mar. Do you hear, sir? you shall have a better match than he, because you are my friend: here is a good sheep's russet sea-gown, will bide more stress, I warrant you, than two of his; yet, for you seem to be an honest gentleman, I am content to change it for your cloak, and ask you nothing for your passage more. [*Pulls off* Perillus's *cloak.*

Per. My own I willingly would change with thee,
And think myself indebted to thy kindness:
But would my friend might keep his garment still.
My friend, I'll give thee this new doublet, if thou wilt
Restore his gown unto him back again.

First Mar. Nay, if I do, would I might ne'er eat powder'd beef and mustard more, nor drink can of good liquor whilst I live. My friend, you have small reason to seek to hinder me of my bargain: but the best is, a bargain's a bargain.

Leir [*to* Perillus.] Kind friend, it is much better as it is.
For by this means we may escape unknown,
Till time and opportunity do fit.

Second Mar. Hark, hark, they are laying their heads together,
They'll repent them of their bargain anon,
'Twere best for us to go while we are well.

First Mar. God be with you, sir, for your passage back again,

I'll use you as unreasonable as another.
Leir. I know thou wilt; but we hope to bring ready money
With us, when we come back again. [*Exeunt mariners.*
Were ever men in this extremity,
In a strange country, and devoid of friends,
And not a penny for to help ourselves?
Kind friend, what think'st thou will become of us?
Per. Be of good cheer, my lord, I have a doublet
Will yield us money enough to serve our turns,
Until we come unto your daughter's court:
And then, I hope, we shall find friends enough.
Leir. Ah, kind Perillus, that is it I fear,
And makes me faint, or ever I come there.
Can kindness spring out of ingratitude?
Or love be reap'd, where hatred hath been sown?
Can henbane join in league with Mithridate?
Or sugar grow in wormwood's bitter stalk?
It cannot be, they are too opposite:
And so am I to any kindness here.
I have thrown wormwood on the sugar'd youth,
And like to henbane poisoned the fount
Whence flowed the Mithridate of a child's good will.
I, like an envious thorn, have prick'd the heart,
And turn'd sweet grapes, to sour unrelish'd sloes:
The causeless ire of my respectless breast,
Hath sour'd the sweet milk of Dame Nature's paps:

My bitter words have gall'd her honey thoughts,
And weeds of rancour chok'd the flower of grace,
Then what remainder is of any hope,
But all our fortunes will go quite aslope?
Per. Fear not, my lord, the perfit good indeed
Can never be corrupted by the bad:
A new fresh vessel still retains the taste
Of that which first is pour'd into the same:
And therefore, though you name yourself the thorn,
The weed, the gall, the henbane, and the wormwood;
Yet she'll continue in her former state,
The honey, milk, grape, sugar, Mithridate.
Leir. Thou pleasing orator unto me in woe,
Cease to beguile me with thy hopeful speeches:
Oh, join with me, and think of nought but crosses,
And then we'll one lament another's losses.
Per. Why, say the worst, the worst can be but death,
And death is better than for to despair:
Then hazard death, which may convert to life;
Banish despair, which brings a thousand deaths.
Leir. O'ercome with thy strong arguments, I yield
To be directed by thee, as thou wilt:
As thou yield'st comfort to my crazed thoughts,
Would I could yield the like unto thy body,
Which is full weak, I know, and ill apaid,
For want of fresh meat and due sustenance.
Per. Alack, my lord, my heart doth bleed, to think

That you should be in such extremity.

Leir. Come, let us go, and see what God will send;
When all means fail, he is the surest friend. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV. *The open country near the coast of Gallia.*

Enter the Gallian king *and* queen, *and* Mumford *with a basket, disguised like country folk.*

King. This tedious journey all on foot, sweet love,
Cannot be pleasing to your tender joints,
Which ne'er were used to these toilsome walks.

Cor. I never in my life took more delight
In any journey, than I do in this:
It did me good, whenas we happ'd to light
Amongst the merry crew of country folk,
To see what industry and pains they took,
To win them commendations 'mongst their friends.
Lord, how they labour to bestir themselves,
And in their quirks to go beyond the moon,
And so take on them with such antic fits,
That one would think they were beside their wits!
Come away, Roger, with your basket.

Mum. Soft, dame, here comes a couple of old youths,
I must needs make myself fat with jesting at them.

Enter Leir *and* Perillus *very faintly.*

Cor. Nay, prithee do not, they do seem to be
Men much o'ercome with grief and misery.

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Let's stand aside, and hearken what they say.
Leir. Ah, my Perillus, now I see we both
Shall end our days in this unfruitful soil,
Oh, I do faint for want of sustenance:
And thou, I know, in little better case.
No gentle tree affords one taste of fruit,
To comfort us, until we meet with men:
No lucky path conducts our luckless steps
Unto a place where any comfort dwells.
Sweet rest betide unto our happy souls;
For here I see our bodies must have end.
Per. Ah, my dear lord, how doth my heart lament,
To see you brought to this extremity!
Oh, if you love me, as you do profess,
Or ever thought well of me in my life; [*He strips up his arm.*
Feed on this flesh, whose veins are not so dry,
But there is virtue left to comfort you.
Oh, feed on this, if this will do you good,
I'll smile for joy, to see you suck my blood.
Leir. I am no cannibal, that I should delight
To slake my hungry jaws with human flesh:
I am no devil, or ten times worse than so,
To suck the blood of such a peerless friend.
Oh, do not think that I respect my life
So dearly, as I do thy loyal love.
Ah, Britain, I shall never see thee more,
That hast unkindly banished thy king:

And yet not thou dost make me to complain,
But they which were more near to me than thou.
Cor. What do I hear? this lamentable voice,
Methinks, ere now I oftentimes have heard.
Leir. Ah, Gonorill, was half my kingdom's gift
The cause that thou didst seek to have my life?
Ah, cruel Ragan, did I give thee all,
And all could not suffice without my blood?
Ah, poor Cordella, did I give thee nought,
Nor never shall be able for to give?
Oh, let me warn all ages that ensueth,
How they trust flattery, and reject the truth.
Well, unkind girls, I here forgive you both,
Yet the just heavens will hardly do the like;
And only crave forgiveness at the end
Of good Cordella, and of thee, my friend;
Of God, whose majesty I have offended,
By my transgression many thousand ways:
Of her, dear heart, whom I for no occasion
Turn'd out of all, through flatterers' persuasion;
Of thee, kind friend, who but for me, I know,
Hadst never come unto this place of woe.
Cor. Alack, that ever I should live to see
My noble father in this misery.
King. Sweet love, reveal not what thou art as yet,
Until we know the ground of all this ill.
Cor. Oh, but some meat, some meat: do you not see

How near they are to death for want of food?
Per. Lord, which didst help thy servants at their need,
Or now or never send us help with speed.
Oh, comfort, comfort! yonder is a banquet,
And men and women, my lord: be of good cheer:
For I see comfort coming very near.
O my lord, a banquet, and men and women!
Leir. Oh, let kind pity mollify their hearts,
That they may help us in our great extremes.
Per. God save you, friends; and if this blessed banquet
Affordeth any food or sustenance,
Even for his sake that sav'd us all from death,
Vouchsafe to save us from the gripe of famine.
[*She bringeth him to the table.*
Cor. Here, father, sit and eat; here sit and drink;
And would it were far better for your sakes!
[Perillus *takes* Leir *by the hand to the table.*
Per. I'll give you thanks anon: my friend doth faint,
And needeth present comfort. [Leir *drinks.*
Mum. I warrant, he ne'er stays to say a grace:
Oh, there's no sauce to a good stomach.
Per. The blessed God of heaven hath thought upon us.
Leir. The thanks be his, and these kind courteous folk,
By whose humanity we are preserv'd.
[*They eat hungrily;* Leir *drinks.*
Cor. And may that draught be unto him, as was
That which old Æson drank, which did renew

His wither'd age, and made him young again.
And may that meat be unto him, as was
That which Elias ate, in strength whereof
He walked forty days, and never fainted.
Shall I conceal me longer from my father?
Or shall I manifest myself to him?
King. Forbear a while, until his strength return,
Lest being over-joy'd with seeing thee,
His poor weak senses should forsake their office,
And so our cause of joy be turned to sorrow.
Per. What cheer, my lord? how do you feel yourself?
Leir. Methinks, I never ate such savoury meat:
It is as pleasant as the blessed manna,
That rain'd from heaven amongst the Israelites:
It hath recall'd my spirits home again,
And made me fresh, as erst I was before.
But how shall we congratulate their kindness?
Per. In faith, I know not how sufficiently;
But the best mean that I can think on, is this:
I'll offer them my doublet in requital;
For we have nothing else to spare.
Leir. Nay, stay, Perillus, for they shall have mine.
Per. Pardon, my lord, I swear they shall have mine.
[Perillus *proffers his doublet: they will not take it.*
Leir. Ah, who would think such kindness should remain
Among such strange and unacquainted men:
And that such hate should harbour in the breast

Of those, which have occasion to be best?
Cor. Ah, good old father, tell to me thy grief,
I'll sorrow with thee, if not add relief.
Leir. Ah, good young daughter, I may call thee so;
For thou art like a daughter I did owe.
Cor. Do you not owe her still? what, is she dead?
Leir. No, God forbid: but all my interest's gone,
By shewing myself too much unnatural:
So have I lost the title of a father,
And may be call'd a stranger to her rather.
Cor. Your title's good still: for 'tis always known,
A man may do as him list with his own.
But have you but one daughter then in all?
Leir. Yes, I have more by two, than would I had.
Cor. O, say not so, but rather see the end;
They that are bad, may have the grace to mend:
But how have they offended you so much?
Leir. If from the first I should relate the cause,
'Twould make a heart of adamant to weep;
And thou, poor soul, kind-hearted as thou art,
Dost weep already, ere I do begin.
Cor. For God's love tell it; and when you have done,
I'll tell the reason why I weep so soon.
Leir. Then know this first, I am a Briton born,
And had three daughters by one loving wife:
And though I say it, of beauty they were sped;
Especially the youngest of the three,

For her perfections hardly match'd could be:
On these I doted with a jealous love,
And thought to try which of them lov'd me best,
By asking them, which would do most for me?
The first and second flatter'd me with words,
And vow'd they lov'd me better than their lives:
The youngest said, she lov'd me as a child
Might do: her answer I esteem'd most vild,
And presently in an outrageous mood,
I turn'd her from me to go sink or swim:
And all I had, even to the very clothes,
I gave in dowry with the other two:
And she that best deserv'd the greatest share,
I gave her nothing, but disgrace and care.
Now mark the sequel: when I had done thus,
I sojourn'd in my eldest daughter's house,
Where for a time I was entreated well,
And liv'd in state sufficing my content:
But every day her kindness did grow cold,
Which I with patience put up well enough,
And seemed not to see the things I saw:
But at the last she grew so far incens'd
With moody fury, and with causeless hate,
That in most vild and contumelious terms,
She bade me pack, and harbour somewhere else.
Then was I fain for refuge to repair
Unto my other daughter for relief;

Who gave me pleasing and most courteous words;
But in her actions showed her self so sore,
As never any daughter did before:
She pray'd me in a morning out betime,
To go to a thicket two miles from the court,
Pointing that there she would come talk with me:
There she had set a shag-hair'd murd'ring wretch,
To massacre my honest friend and me.
Then judge yourself, although my tale be brief,
If ever man had greater cause of grief.

King. Nor never like impiety was done,
Since the creation of the world begun.

Leir. And now I am constrain'd to seek relief
Of her, to whom I have been so unkind;
Whose censure, if it do award me death,
I must confess she pays me but my due:
But if she shew a loving daughter's part,
It comes of God and her, not my desert.

Cor. No doubt she will, I dare be sworn she will.

Leir. How know you that, not knowing what she is?

Cor. Myself a father have a great way hence,
Us'd me as ill as ever you did her;
Yet, that his reverend age I once might see,
I'd creep along to meet him on my knee.

Leir. Oh, no men's children are unkind but mine.

Cor. Condemn not all, because of others' crime:
But look, dear father, look, behold and see;

Thy loving daughter speaketh unto thee. [*She kneels.*
Leir. Oh, stand thou up, it is my part to kneel,
And ask forgiveness for my former faults. [*He kneels.*
Cor. Oh, if you wish, I should enjoy my breath,
Dear father rise, or I receive my death. [*He riseth.*
Leir. Then I will rise to satisfy your mind,
But kneel again, till pardon be resign'd. [*He kneels.*
Cor. I pardon you: the word beseems not me:
But I do say so, for to ease your knee;
You gave me life, you were the cause that I
Am what I am, who else had never been.
Leir. But you gave life to me and to my friend,
Whose days had else had an untimely end.
Cor. You brought me up, whenas I was but young,
And far unable for to help myself.
Leir. I cast thee forth, whenas thou wast but young,
And far unable for to help thyself.
Cor. God, world, and nature, say I do you wrong,
That can endure to see you kneel so long.
King. Let me break off this loving controversy,
Which doth rejoice my very soul to see.
Good father, rise, she is your loving daughter, [*He riseth.*
And honours you with as respective duty,
As if you were the monarch of the world.
Cor. But I will never rise from off my knee, [*She kneels.*
Until I have your blessing, and your pardon
Of all my faults committed any way,

From my first birth unto this present day.
Leir. The blessing, which the God of Abraham gave
Unto the tribe of Judah, light on thee,
And multiply thy days, that thou may'st see
Thy children's children prosper after thee.
Thy faults, which are just none that I do know,
God pardon on high, and I forgive below. [*She riseth.*
Cor. Now is my heart at quiet, and doth leap
Within my breast, for joy of this good hap:
And now, dear father, welcome to our court,
And welcome, kind Perillus, unto me,
Mirror of virtue and true honesty.
Leir. Oh, he hath been the kindest friend to me,
That ever man had in adversity.
Per. [My tongue doth fail, to say what heart doth think,]
I am so ravish'd with exceeding joy.
King. All you have spoke: now let me speak my mind,
And in few words much matter here conclude: [*He kneels.*
If e'er my heart do harbour any joy,
Or true content repose within my breast
Till I have rooted out this viperous sect,
And repossess'd my father of his crown,
Let me be counted for the perjur'd'st man,
That ever spake word since the world began. [*Rises.*
Mum. Let me pray too, that never pray'd before; [Mumford *kneels.*
If ere I resalute the British earth,

(As, ere't be long, I do presume I shall)
And do return from thence without my wench,
Let me be gelded for my recompense. [*Rises.*
King. Come, let's to arms for to redress this wrong:
Till I am there, methinks the time seems long. [*Exeunt.*

Scene V. *A room in the royal palace of Cambria.*

Enter Ragan *sola.*

Ragan. I feel a hell of conscience in my breast,
Tormenting me with horror for my fact,
And makes me in an agony of doubt,
For fear the world should find my dealing out.
The slave whom I appointed for the act,
I ne'er set eye upon the peasant since:
Oh, could I get him for to make him sure,
My doubts would cease, and I should rest secure.
But if the old men, with persuasive words,
Have sav'd their lives, and made him to relent;
Then are they fled unto the court of France,
And like a trumpet manifest my shame.
A shame on these white-liver'd slaves, say I,
That with fair words so soon are overcome.
O God, that I had been but made a man;
Or that my strength were equal with my will!
These foolish men are nothing but mere pity,
And melt as butter doth against the sun.

Why should they have pre-eminence over us,
Since we are creatures of more brave resolve?
I swear, I am quite out of charity
With all the heartless men in Christendom.
A pox upon them, when they are afraid
To give a stab, or slit a paltry wind-pipe,
Which are so easy matters to be done.
Well, had I thought the slave would serve me so,
Myself would have been executioner:
'Tis now undone, and if that it be known,
I'll make as good shift as I can for one.
He that repines at me, howe'r it stands,
'Twere best for him to keep him from my hands. [*Exit.*

Scene VI. *A Port of Gallia.*

Sounds drums and trumpets: Enter the Gallian *king*, Leir, Mumford, *and the army.*

King. Thus have we brought our army to the sea,
Whereas our ships are ready to receive us:
The wind stands fair, and we in four hours' sail,
May easily arrive on British shore,
Where unexpected we may them surprise,
And gain a glorious victory with ease.
Wherefore, my loving countrymen, resolve,
Since truth and justice fighteth on our sides,
That we shall march with conquest where we go.

Myself will be as forward as the first,
And step by step march with the hardiest wight:
And not the meanest soldier in our camp
Shall be in danger, but I'll second him.
To you, my lord, we give the whole command
Of all the army, next unto ourself;
Not doubting of you, but you will extend
Your wonted valour in this needful case,
Encouraging the rest to do the like,
By your approved magnanimity.
Mum. My liege, 'tis needless to spur a willing horse,
That's apt enough to run himself to death;
For here I swear by that sweet saint's bright eyes,
Which are the stars, which guide me to good hap,
Either to see my old lord crown'd anew,
Or in his cause to bid the world adieu.
Leir. Thanks, good lord Mumford, 'tis more of your good will,
Than any merit or desert in me.
Mum. And now to you, my worthy countrymen,
Ye valiant race of Genovestan Gauls,
Surnamed Red-shanks, for your chivalry,
Because you fight up to the shanks in blood;
Shew yourselves now to be right Gauls indeed,
And be so bitter on your enemies,
That they may say, you are as bitter as gall.
Gall them, brave shot, with your artillery:

Gall them, brave halberts, with your sharp point bills,
Each in their 'pointed place, not one, but all,
Fight for the credit of yourselves and Gaul.

King. Then what should more persuasion need to those,
That rather wish to deal, than hear of blows?
Let's to our ships, and if that God permit,
In four hours' sail, I hope we shall be there.

Mum. And in five hours more, I make no doubt,
But we shall bring our wish'd desires about. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VII. *The ramparts of a town in Britain (Dover).*

Enter a Captain of the Watch, and two Watchmen.

Capt. My honest friends, it is your turn to-night,
To watch in this place, near about the beacon,
And vigilantly have regard,
If any fleet of ships pass hitherward:
Which if you do, your office is to fire
The beacon presently, and raise the town. [*Exit.*

First W. Ay, ay, ay, fear nothing; we know our charge, I warrant: I have been a watchman about this beacon this thirty year, and yet I ne'er see it stir, but stood as quietly as might be.

Second W. Faith, neighbour, and you'll follow my 'vice, instead of watching the beacon, we'll go to goodman Jennings, and watch a pot of ale and a rasher of bacon: and if we do

not drink ourselves drunk, then so; I warrant, the beacon will see us when we come out again.

First W. Ay, but how if somebody excuse us to the captain?

Second W. 'Tis no matter, I'll prove by good reason that we watch the beacon: ass for example.

First W. I hope you do not call me ass by craft, neighbour.

Second W. No, no, but for example: say here stands the pot of ale; that's the beacon.

First W. Ay, ay, 'tis a very good beacon.

Second W. Well, say here stands your nose, that's the fire.

First W. Indeed I must confess, 'tis somewhat red.

Second W. I see come marching in a dish half a score pieces of salt bacon.

First W. I understand your meaning, that's as much as to say, half a score ships.

Second W. True, you conster right; presently, like a faithful watchman, I fire the beacon, and call up the town.

First W. Ay, that's as much as to say, you set your nose to the pot, and drink up the drink.

Second W. You are in the right; come, let's go fire the beacon. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VIII. *Before the walls of a town in Britain* (*Dover*).

Enter the king of Gallia *with a still march*, Mumford *and soldiers.*

King. Now march our ensigns on the British earth,
And we are near approaching to the town:
Then look about you, valiant countrymen,
And we shall finish this exploit with ease.
Th' inhabitants of this mistrustful place
Are dead asleep, as men that are secure:
Here shall we skirmish but with naked men,
Devoid of sense, new waked from a dream,
That know not what our coming doth pretend,
Till they do feel our meaning on their skins:
Therefore assail: God and our right for us. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IX. *An open place in a town of Britain.*

Alarm, with men and women half naked: Enter two Captains without doublets, with swords.

First C. Where are these villains that were set to watch,
And fire the beacon, if occasion serv'd,
That thus have suffer'd us to be surpris'd,
And never given notice to the town?
We are betray'd, and quite devoid of hope,
By any means to fortify ourselves.

Second C. 'Tis ten to one the peasants are o'ercome with drink and sleep, and so neglect their charge.

First C. A whirl-wind carry them quick to a whirl-pool,
That there the slaves may drink their bellies full.
Second C. This 'tis, to have the beacon so near the ale-house.

Enter the Watchmen drunk, with each a pot.

First C. Out on ye, villains, whither run you now?
First W. To fire the town, and call up the beacon.
Second W. No, no, sir, to fire the beacon. [*He drinks.*
Second C. What, with a pot of ale, you drunken rogues?
First C. You'll fire the beacon, when the town is lost:
I'll teach you how to tend your office better.
[*Draws to stab them.*

Enter Mumford, *Captains run away.*

Mum. Yield, yield, yield. [*He kicks down their pots.*
First W. Reel? no, we do not reel:
You may lack a pot of ale ere you die.
Mum. But in mean space, I answer, you want none.
Well, there's no dealing with you, y'are tall men, and well weapon'd;
I would there were no worse than you in the town. [*Exit.*
Second W. A speaks like an honest man, my choler's past already.
Come, neighbour, let's go.
First W. Nay, first let's see and we can stand. [*Exeunt.*
[*Alarum, excursions,* Mumford *after them, and some half naked.*

Scene X. *An open place in a town of Britain.*

Enter the Gallian *king*, Leir, Mumford, Cordella, Perillus, *and soldiers, with the chief of the town bound.*

King. Fear not, my friends, you shall receive no hurt,
If you'll subscribe unto your lawful king,
And quite revoke your fealty from Cambria,
And from aspiring Cornwall too, whose wives
Have practis'd treason 'gainst their father's life.
We come in justice of your wronged king,
And do intend no harm at all to you,
So you submit unto your lawful king.

Leir. Kind countrymen, it grieves me, that perforce,
I am constrain'd to use extremities.

Nobles. Long have you here been look'd for, good my lord,
And wish'd for by a general consent:
And had we known your highness had arriv'd,
We had not made resistance to your grace:
And now, my gracious lord, you need not doubt,
But all the country will yield presently,
Which since your absence have been greatly tax'd,
For to maintain their overswelling pride.
We'll presently send word to all our friends;
When they have notice, they will come apace.

Leir. Thanks, loving subjects; and thanks, worthy son,
Thanks, my kind daughter, thanks to you, my lord,
Who willingly adventured have your blood,

(Without desert) to do me so much good.
Mum. Oh, say not so:
I have been much beholding to your grace:
I must confess, I have been in some skirmishes,
But I was never in the like to this:
For where I was wont to meet with armed men,
I was now encountered with naked women.
Cor. We that are feeble, and want use of arms,
Will pray to God, to shield you from all harms.
Leir. The while your hands do manage ceaseless toil,
Our hearts shall pray, the foes may have the foil.
Per. We'll fast and pray, whilst you for us do fight,
That victory may prosecute the right.
King. Methinks, your words do amplify (my friends)
And add fresh vigour to my willing limbs: [*Drum.*
But hark, I hear the adverse drum approach.
God and our right, saint Denis, and saint George.

Enter Cornwall, Cambria, Gonorill, Ragan, *and the army.*

Corn. Presumptuous king of Gauls, how darest thou
Presume to enter on our British shore?
And more than that, to take our towns perforce,
And draw our subjects' hearts from their true king?
Be sure to buy it at as dear a price,
As e'er you bought presumption in your lives.
King. O'er-daring Cornwall, know, we came in right,
And just revengement of the wronged king,

Whose daughters there, fell vipers as they are,
Have sought to murder and deprive of life:
But God protected him from all their spite,
And we are come in justice of his right.
Cam. Nor he nor thou have any interest here,
But what you win and purchase with the sword.
Thy slanders to our noble virtuous queens,
We'll in the battle thrust them down thy throat,
Except for fear of our revenging hands,
Thou fly to sea, as not secure on lands.
Mum. Welshman, I'll so ferret you ere night for that word,
That you shall have no mind to crake so well this twelvemonth.
Gon. They lie, that say, we sought our father's death.
Ragan. 'Tis merely forged for a colour's sake,
To set a gloss on your invasion.
Methinks, an old man ready for to die,
Should be asham'd to broach so foul a lie.
Cord. Fy, shameless sister, so devoid of grace,
To call our father liar to his face.
Gon. Peace, puritan, dissembling hypocrite,
Which art so good, that thou wilt prove stark naught:
Anon, when as I have you in my fingers,
I'll make you wish yourself in purgatory.
Per. Nay, peace, thou monster, shame unto thy sex:
Thou fiend in likeness of a human creature.

Ragan. I never heard a fouler spoken man.
Leir. Out on thee, viper, scum, filthy parricide,
More odious to my sight than is a toad:
Knowest thou these letters?
[*She snatches them and tears them.*
Ragan. Think you to outface me with your paltry scrolls?
You come to drive my husband from his right,
Under the colour of a forged letter.
Leir. Who ever heard the like impiety?
Per. You are our debtor of more patience:
We were more patient when we stay'd for you,
Within the thicket two long hours and more.
Ragan. What hours? what thicket?
Per. There, where you sent your servant with your letters,
Seal'd with your hand, to send us both to heaven,
Where, as I think, you never mean to come.
Ragan. Alas, you are grown a child again with age,
Or else your senses dote for want of sleep.
Per. Indeed you made us rise betimes, you know.
Yet had a care we should sleep where you bade us stay,
But never wake more till the latter day.
Gon. Peace, peace, old fellow, thou art sleepy still.
Mum. Faith, and if you reason till to-morrow,
You get no other answer at their hands.
'Tis pity two such good faces
Should have so little grace between them.
Well, let us see if their husbands with their hands

Can do as much as they do with their tongues.
Cam. Ay, with their swords they'll make your tongues unsay
What they have said, or else they'll cut them out.
King. To't, gallants, to't, let's not stand brawling thus.
[*Exeunt both armies.*

SCENE XI. *A Battlefield outside the walls of a town of Britain.*

Sound Alarum: excursions. Mumford *must chase* Cambria *away: then cease. Enter* Cornwall.

Corn. The day is lost, our friends do all revolt,
And join against us with the adverse part:
There is no means of safety but by flight,
And therefore I'll to Cornwall with my queen. [*Exit.*

Enter Cambria.

Cam. I think, there is a devil in the camp hath haunted me to-day: he hath so tired me, that in a manner I can fight no more.

Enter Mumford.

Zounds! here he comes, I'll take me to my horse. [*Exit.*
[Mumford *follows him to the door, and returns.*
Mum. Farewell, Welshman, give thee but thy due,
Thou hast a light and nimble pair of legs:
Thou art more in debt to them than to thy hands:

But if I meet thee once again to-day,
I'll cut them off, and set them to a better heart. [*Exit.*

Scene XII. *The Same.*

Alarums and excursions; then sound victory. Enter Leir, Perillus, King, Cordella, *and* Mumford.

King. Thanks be to God, your foes are overcome,
And you again possessed of your right.
Leir. First to the heavens; next, thanks to you, my son,
By whose good means I repossess the same:
Which if it please you to accept yourself,
With all my heart I will resign to you:
For it is yours by right, and none of mine.
First, have you rais'd, at your own charge, a power
Of valiant soldiers; this comes all from you;
Next have you ventur'd your own person's scathe.
And lastly, worthy Gallia never stain'd,
My kingly title I by thee have gain'd.
King. Thank heavens, not me, my zeal to you is such,
Command my utmost, I will never grutch.
Cor. He that with all kind love entreats his queen,
Will not be to her father unkind seen.
Leir. Ah, my Cordella, now I call to mind,
The modest answer, which I took unkind:
But now I see, I am no whit beguil'd,
Thou lovedst me dearly, and as ought a child.

And thou, Perillus, partner once in woe,
Thee to requite, the best I can, I'll do:
Yet all I can, ay, were it ne'er so much,
Were not sufficient, thy true love is such.
Thanks, worthy Mumford, to thee last of all,
Not greeted last, 'cause thy desert was small;
No, thou hast lion-like laid on to-day,
Chasing the Cornwall king and Cambria;
Who with my daughters, daughters did I say?
To save their lives, the fugitives did play.
Come, son and daughter, who did me advance,
Repose with me awhile, and then for France.

[*Sound drums and trumpets.* *Exeunt.*

NOTES

I. i. 23. *And age hath made deep furrows in my face*] Cf. Barnfield's *Affectionate Shepherd* (1594) *ed.* Arber, p. 23 :

> 'Behold my grey head full of silver hairs
> My wrinkled skin *deep furrows in my face.*'

I. i. 42. *heir indubitate*] Cf. Warner's *Albion's England*, Bk. VIII. ch. xxxviii. lines 1–2 : '8 Henry, *heir indubitate* of York and Lancaster.'

I. i. 43. *set*] Thus the original ; a misprint for *sat.*

I. i. 74. *Lest streams, being stopp'd, above the banks do swell*], Cf. *Venus and Adonis*, 331–332 :

> 'An oven that is stopped, or *river stayed*,
> Burneth more hotly, *swelleth with more rage.*'

The figure is common in Shakespeare. Cf. *Cor.* III. i. 249–250 ; *Two Gent.* II. vii. 25–6 :

> 'The current *being stopped* impatiently doth rage,'

K. John, II. i. 335 *seq.* :

> 'the current . . .
> Whose passage, vex'd with thy impediment,
> Shall leave his native channel and o'erswell
> With course disturb'd even thy confining shores.'

I. ii. 1–12. *I marvel, Ragan . . . she exceedeth me and you*] This speech seems to echo the lamentation of Queene Cordila in the *Mirror for Magistrates*, stanza 8 :

> 'What though I youngest were, yet men me judged more wise
> Than either Gonorill or Ragan more of age ;
> And fairer far ; wherefore my sisters did despise
> My grace and gifts.'

I. ii. 53. *Which of you three do*] The plural verb 'do' has a singular subject 'which'. The solecism is due to the proximity of the plural word, 'three'.

I. iii. 7. *None knows, but He, that knows my thoughts and secret deeds*] The line as it stands is an Alexandrine.

I. iii. 78. *I cannot paint my duty forth in words*] Cf. Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, Bk. II. Canto x. stanza 28 (Cordeill's simple answer) :

> 'wanting colours fair
> To *paint* it *forth*.'

I. iii. 90–91. *Every child . . . their father*] A grammatical solecism, which is repeated IV. vii. 53, *infra*.

I. iii. 93–94. *some are so father-sick . . . to rid them from the world*] Cf. Warner's *Albion's England*, Bk. III., ch. xiv :

> 'Her sisters, *sick of father's health*, their husbands by consent
> Did join in arms.'

I. iii. 98. *To this*] To this point in your career.

I. iii. 104. *You were not best say*] You had best not say.

I. iii. 113. *Peace, bastard imp, no issue of King Leir*] Cf. Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, Pt. II. Act I. sc. iii :

> '*Bastardly boy*, sprung from some coward's loins,
> And *not the issue* of Great Tamburlaine.'

I. iii. 117. *nor mine*] Thus the original edition. Steevens substituted *or mine*.

I. iii. 119–120. *My kingdom . . . to their royal dower*] Cf. Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, Bk. II. Canto x. stanza 29:

> 'So wedded th' one to Maglan King of Scots,
> And t'other to the King of Cambria,
> And 'twixt them shared his realm by equal lots.'

Spenser is the only writer who credits Leir with this method of dividing his property, which is duly carried out II. iii. 80–81, *infra*. In the earlier version Leir apportions his kingdom between the two daughters at his own discretion.

I. iii. 129. *Now whither, poor forsaken, shall I go?*] The line probably belonged to a popular song. Cf. *Mucedorus* IV. ii., Daniel's *Delia* 1594, Sonnet xlvii:

> 'Ah whither poor forsaken shall I go?'

II. i. 4–5. *the wondrous praise Of these three nymphs, the daughters of King Leir*] Here as *infra* V. iii. 148, and V. x. 97, stress is laid on the uniform beauty of the three daughters; both Gonorill and Ragan are described as being hardly less fair than Cordella. The old versions of the story usually credit Cordelia alone with any personal attraction. Spenser in the *Faerie Queene*, II. x. 27, alone anticipates the old dramatist here. Spenser describes Lear's children as

> 'Three fair daughters which were well uptrained
> In all that seemed fit for King's seed.'

The old dramatist, however, not quite consistently, emphasizes Cordella's surpassing beauty, I. ii. 1–12.

II. i. 11. *As Jason, when he won the golden fleece*] This story was chiefly known to the Elizabethans through Ovid's version, *Metam.* vii. 1. Shakespeare only mentions Jason in the *Merch. of Ven.*, where there are two specific notices of him (I. i. 170–2 ; III. ii. 244). See note on 'Æson,' V. iv. 96–97 *infra*.

II. ii. 15. *old Daedalus' waxen wings*] The attempt of Daedalus to fly, along with his son Icarus, is told in Ovid's *Metam.* viii. 183 *seq.* Daedalus is only once mentioned in Shakespeare's work, 3 *Henry VI.*, V. vi. 21. There is a second reference to the son Icarus alone in 1 *Henry VI.*, IV. vi. 55.

II. ii. 17. *Troynovant*] The reputed name of London on its first foundation by Brute, the first king of legendary Britain. Brute, the alleged grandson of Aeneas of Troy, is said to have named his city Troia nova, or New Troy, which words became Troynovant in the British vernacular. See Introduction, pp. xxvi.

II. ii. 38. *The moiety or half*] The original text has *of* for *or*, reading *The moiety of half*, i.e. the quarter. The emendation is suggested by the Malone Society's reprint, and is in accord with Leir's method of dividing his property, which is adopted in the play. See I. iii. 119–120, *supra*, and II. iii. 80–81, *infra*. It is worth observing that the original reading here agrees with the different version of Leir's mode of dividing his kingdom, which appears in Holinshed and all the earlier histories ; there Leir reserves half his property for himself, and only divides the remaining half between his two daughters. Spenser was the first writer to make Leir deliberately give his *whole* kingdom away in two halves. See note on I. iii. 119–120 *supra*.

II. ii. 51. *'sblood*] The original text reads *zlood*. But

the common abbreviation of the oath 'by God's blood' is clearly intended. Cf. II. iii. 44 *infra*.

II. ii. 59–60. *'Twere pity . . . cloister's wall*] Cf. Warner's *Albion's England*, Bk. II. ch. xi. :

> 'It grieves that nature's paragon in cloister not in court
> Should lose the beauty of her youth.'

II. iii. 20. *She were right fit to make a parson's wife*] In the British Museum copy (C. 34, l. 11) an old manuscript note on this line runs mysteriously thus : '† the second part | to the same Tune.'

II. iii. 27. *She'll lay her husband's benefice on her back*] A contemptuous reference to the extravagance of women's dress. The expression is common. Cf. Shakespeare's 2 *Henry VI.*, I. iii. 78 :

> 'She bears a duke's revenues on her back.'

Marlowe's *Edward II.*, I. iv. 408 :

> 'He wears a lord's revenues on his back,'

and *Sir John Oldcastle*, (1600) I. iii. 35–36 :

> 'Your backs, your backs, the devil and pride
> Hath cut the throats of all good housekeeping.'

II. iii. 45–47. *as jealous as the princely eagle . . . splendour of the sun*] It was a familiar tradition of natural history that the genuineness of a young eagle's breed could be tested by its power of facing without flinching the glare of the sun. Cf. 3 *Henry VI.*, II. i. 90–91 :

> 'if thou be that princely eagle's bird
> Show thy descent by gazing 'gainst the sun.'

Cf. *Soliman and Perseda* (Dodsley's Old Plays, V, p. 319) :

> 'As air-bred eagles, if they once perceive
> That any of their brood but close their sight
> When they should gaze against the glorious sun,
> They straightway seize upon him with their talons,
> That on the earth it may untimely die,
> For looking but askew at heaven's bright eye.'

The conceit was very common in Elizabethan sonnets. *E.g.* Drayton's *Idea*, Sonnet lvi. (*Elizabethan Sonnets* 1904, *ed.* Lee, Vol. I. p. xc.).

II. iv. 57. *To utter grief doth ease a heart o'ercharg'd*] Cf. *Tit. Andr.* II. iv. 36–37 :

> 'Sorrow concealed, like an oven stopp'd,
> Doth burn the heart to cinders,'

and *Venus and Adonis*, 333–334 :

> 'So of concealed sorrow may be said ;
> *Free vent of words love's fire doth assuage.*'

II. iv. 104. *Hath light*] The singular verb has a plural subject, as is not uncommon in Elizabethan grammar. Cf. IV. ii. 14 ; IV. iii. 16 ; IV. v. 3 ; IV. vi. 20 ; V. iii. 21, *infra*. 'Light' is the past participle, and is equivalent here to 'alighted.'

III. iii. 27. *young bones*] unborn child. Cf. Shakespeare's *Lear*, II. iv. 165 :

> 'Strike her *young bones* . . . with lameness.'

III. iii. 43–46. *Why do I over-live myself . . . with a perfit zeal*] There seems an echo here of Warner's *Albion's Englana*, Bk. III. ch. xiv. :

> 'Prolong not life, defer not death, myself I *overlive*,
> When those that owe to me their lives to me my death would give.'

III. iv. 1. (stage direction) *sola*] The original text reads ungrammatically *solus*. Cf. IV. i. 1 (stage direction) *infra*.

IV. i. 1. (stage direction) *sola*] The original text reads ungrammatically *solus*. Cf. III. iv. 1 (stage direction) *supra*.

IV. ii. 14. *cuts*] See note on II. iv. 104 *supra*.

IV. iii. 16. *See*] The original text misprints *She*.

IV. v. 3. *seeks*] See note on II. iv. 104 *supra*.

IV. v. 5. *No more, here comes the queen, now shall I know her mind*] The line as it stands is an Alexandrine. Probably *No more* should fill a separate line.

IV. v. 53–55. *the pipe Of Mercury . . . Argus, and enforc'd him sleep*] Ovid *Metam.* i. 715 *seq.* is the source whence the Elizabethan poets seem to have derived the story of the effect of Hermes' pipe on watchful Argus. Cf. Shakespeare's *Henry V.*, III. vii. 19, for an allusion to the music of the pipe of Hermes; see also 2 *Henry IV.*, IV. ii. 38–39, where the 'dangerous eyes of Hydra' (a mistake for Argus) are 'charm'd asleep.'

IV. vi. 20. *salutes*] See note on II. iv. 104 *supra*.

IV. vii. 34. *For fear of death is worse than death itself*] Cf. *Meas. for Meas.* III. i. 79:

> 'The sense of death is most in apprehension.'

IV. vii. 53. *each . . . their*] A grammatical solecism, which is also found I. iii. 90–91 *supra*.

IV. vii. 55. *hand*] The original text here reads *hands*, though it gives *hand* in line 53.

IV. vii. 85. *wish*] The subject 'I' is here implied.

IV. vii. 120. *Damon*] The original text misprints *Damion*.

IV. vii. 140. *see*] The verb is here in the imperative mood.

V. ii. 15. *the loss*] The original text reads *the less*, which makes no sense.

V. iii. 21. (stage direction) *change*] The original text reads *changeth*, the singular verb with a plural subject. See note on II. iv. 104 *supra*.

V. iii. 25. *yet*] This is the original reading. Steevens misprinted *yes*.

V. iv. 56. *ensueth*] See note on II. iv. 104 *supra*.

V. iv. 90. *a grace*] The original edition omits the article, which Steevens inserted.

V. iv. 93. *folk*] The word has here a possessive force, *i.e.* folk's.

V. iv. 94. (stage direction) *hungrily*] The original text gives *hungerly*, a form of the adverb which is not infrequently found in Elizabethan books. See *N.E.D.*

V. iv. 96–97. *That which old Æson drank . . . made him young again*] An allusion to the story of the rejuvenation of Æson, the aged father of Jason, by means of juices which Medea infused into his veins. Cf. Ovid's *Metam.* vii. 287 *seq.* Shakespeare refers to Æson's story in *Merch. of Ven.* V. i. 12–13 :

> 'Medea gather'd the enchanted herbs That did renew old Aeson.'

Elsewhere Shakespeare shows very close acquaintance with Ovid's account of Medea's concoction of the magic potion as well as her incantation. Medea's ingredients seem to have suggested some contents of the witches' cauldron in *Macbeth*, while her incantation is closely followed by Prospero in his speech surrendering his supernatural power.

V. iv. 99–100. *That which Elias ate . . . and never fainted*] Cf. 1 Kings xix. 8 : 'And he [Elijah] arose, and did eat and drink, and *went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights* unto Horeb the mount of God.'

V. vi. 8. *fighteth*] See note on II. iv. 104 *supra*.

V. vi. 22. *eyes*] The original text reads *eye*, which does not construe with the next line.

V. vi. 29–30. *Genovestan Gauls, Surnamed Red-shanks*] The phrase is difficult to explain. Warner in his *Albion's England* Bk. III. ch. xvi., in describing the exploits in France of Bren or Brennus, a successor of Lear on the British throne, mentioned that Bren's allies in Gaul were 'the *Cenouesean Gawles*.' Doubtless the old dramatist there found the word, which his printer reproduced as *Genouestan*. Neither form is quite comprehensible. The dominion of the Gallian King in the play clearly extended to the northern coast of France, where Guisne (near Calais) seems the only place of possible philological kinship with Genovestan. Orleans, the city of mid France, seems to have been originally called Cenabum or Genabum, and its inhabitants Cenabenses or Genabenses. But the French prince who was Lear's son-in-law has no obvious relation with a region so far to the south. Nor does there seem any other example of giving the Gauls the surname of Redshanks, a designation commonly applied by Elizabethan writers only to Irish Celts or Gaelic Scots, from their habit of going bare-legged. Spenser calls the Gaulish home of Cordelia's husband Celtica, and hence the old dramatist may have been led to bestow on its inhabitants a descriptive appellation usually reserved for the Celts of Ireland or Scotland.

V. vii. 26–27. *as to say*] The original text omits *as*.

V. viii. 1. (stage direction) *a still march*] A soft, or softly played march. Cf. '*still* music' in Shakespeare's *Mids. Night's Dr.* IV. i. stage direction, and *As You Like It*, V. iv. stage direction.

V. x. 101. *tongues*] The original text reads *toung* (*tongue*) in the singular, which does not construe.

GLOSSARY

ABUSE, *v.t.*, deceive, III. v. 91

ÆSON, V. iv. 96–97. *See* Note.

ALLOW, *v.i.*, approve, I. i. 60

AND, *conj.*, an (with the conditional significance of 'if'), IV. v. 9; IV. vi. 13; IV. vii. 192; V. vii. 12

ANNOY, *sb.*, annoyance, anxiety, I. iii. 13

AS, *conj.*, punningly confused with 'ass,' V. vii. 19–20. For the common pun, cf. *Hamlet*, V. ii. 43: 'And many such like "As"-es of great charge.'

ASLOPE, *adv.*, awry, V. iii. 73

ASSIZES, *sb.*, judgment day, I. iii. 30; 'sessions' is similarly used of the day of judgment, *Edward III.*, II. ii. 165

BACK, *sb.*, II. iii. 27. *See* Note.

BEWRAY, *v.t.*, betray, disclose, I. i. 90

BILLINGSGATE, a well-known riverside quarter of London, III. v. 78 ('as any oyster wife at B.'); V. iii. 18 (the seaman says that his 'good strong motley gaberdine' cost him 'fourteen good shillings at B.'). Billingsgate, which is said to be named after Belin, one of the Brito-Trojan kings, was in Elizabethan times known both as a fish-market and as a mart for cheap clothing which sailors patronized.

BONNET, *sb.*, cap, used of a man's headgear, II. iv. 117

BY-AND-BY, *adv.*, immediately, III. ii. 15

CAVILLATION, *sb.*, IV. iii. 41, legal quibble, legal objection taken on false grounds; 'forged,' as in the text, is a common epithet of the word. *See N.E.D.*

CEASE, *v.t.*, make to cease; bring to an end, I. i. 66; III. iii. 23

CENSURE, *sb.*, judgment, I. i. 39, 49; II. iii. 37; *v.t.*, judge, I. i. 33

CHERUBINS, cherubs, I. i. 4. Cherub*in* is the correct Hebrew plural; the *s* is redundant. Such confusion is common. Shakespeare in *Othello*, IV. ii. 64, used 'cherubin' as a singular noun.

COMPLAIN HIMSELF, *v.r.*, complain; like the French 'se plaindre,' IV. ii. 48

COMPLEMENTS, *sb.*, accomplishments, II. ii. 48

CONCEIT, *v.i.*, think, III. v. 101

CONFORMABLE, *adj.*, amenable to filial affection, I. iii. 17

CONGEES, *sb.*, salutations, II. i. 29. Cf. *The Dumb Knight*, 1608 (Dodsley's Old Plays, X. 121), 'A lady is the most sweet lascivious life, *congies* and kisses.'

CONGRATULATE, *v.t.*, express satisfaction with, show gratitude for, recognise gratefully, V. iv. 113

CONSTER, *v.i.*, construe, interpret, V. vii. 30

CONY, *sb.*, rabbit, III. v. 104

COOLING CARD, *sb.*, anything that cools passion or enthusiasm, a damper; III. iv. 11. Cf. 1 *Hen. VI.*, V. iii. 84: 'There all is marr'd; there lies *a cooling card*.'

CRAKE, *v.i.*, crow like a raven, boast, V. x. 60. Cf. *Thersites* (Dodsley's Old Plays, I. 410), 'by the mass, I do but *crake*'; (*ibid.* I. 430) 'a coward *craking*.'

DAMON, IV. vii. 120, a classical type of loyal friendship. *See* Richard Edwardes' popular play, *Damon and Pythias*, 1566.

DAZZLE, *v.i.*, blink, II. iii. 46. The intransitive use is not uncommon. Nashe's *Terrors of the Night* (Nashe's Works, ed. McKerrow, I. 355) : 'one's eyes glamour and *dazle* when,' etc. Kyd's *Soliman and Perseda* II. i. 244 : 'dasell mine eyes . . .' Webster's *Duchess of Malfi*, IV. ii. : 'mine eyes dazzle'

DENIS, ST., the patron Saint of France, II. iv. 39

DETRACT, *v.t.*, slander, III. v. 90

DISASTER, *adj.* disastrous, like the French desastrè (IV. ii. 36. The usage is common in Greene's works. See *N.E.D.*

DISCONSOLATE, *v.r.*, distress, III. iii. 49

DISPOSE *sb.*, disposal, III., v. 68

DISPOSED, *p.p.*, disposed to merriment, light-hearted, V. i. 40

DISTEMPERATE, *v.t.*, distrust, IV. iv. 31

DUMPS, *sb.*, low spirits, melancholy, III. iii. 13

ELEMENT, *sb.*, sky, IV. iv. 38

ENDURABLE, *adj.*, of long duration, IV. ii. 35

ENTREAT, *v.t.*, treat, use, III. iii. 103 ; V. iv. 166

ERST, *adv.*, formerly, II. iii. 83 ; IV. iv. 60 ; IV. vii. 62 ; V. iv. 112

EVENT, *sb.*, issue, success, III. iv. 4

EXCEED, *v.i.*, go to excess, IV. vi. 48

EXCREMENT, *sb.*, growth, III. iii. 64

EXCUSE, blunderingly used for 'accuse,' V. vii. 16

FACT, *sb.*, deed, crime, IV. iii. 34 ; IV. v. 47 *seq.*

FANCY, *sb.*, love, I. i. 73

FATHER-SICK, *adj.*, tired of their fathers, I. iii. 93. *See* Note.

FERRIT, *v.t.*, worry. V. x. 59. Cf. *Hen. V.*, IV. iv. 30.

FLUSH, *adj.*, well-to-do, provided with cash, IV. v. 1

FOIL, *sb.*, defeat, V. x. 34

FOND, *adj.*, foolish, I. iii. 135

FOPPET, *sb.*, diminutive of 'fop,' in the sense of 'fool,' II. iv. 146. The word, which is in the text applied to young women, is found nowhere else.

FOR TO, *conj.*, in modern English 'for' is here redundant. Cf. for to know, I. ii. 52; for to tie, I. iii., 43, 49. *See also* II. iii. 6, 20; IV. ii. 16; IV. v. 45; IV. vii. 12, 111, 146; IV. viii. 14; V. iii. 87; V. iv. 55, 218–220

FORGED, *p.p.*, fabricated, invented, IV. iii. 41

GABERDINE, *sb.*, a loose cloak of coarse material, V. iii. 18

GEAR, *sb.*, business, IV. vii. 99. Try this gear = put this business to the test.

GENOVESTAN, V. vi. 29. *See* Note.

GOODMAN, *sb.*, 'mine host,' innkeeper, V. iii. 12

GRAFT, *p.p.*, grafted, IV. iv. 15

GRANT (TO), *v.t.*, the prepositional affix 'to' seems redundant, I. ii. 96

GRUTCH, *v.i.*, a form of 'grudge,' used intransitively in the sense of 'complain,' V. xii. 14. Cf. Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, II. ii. 34: 'For both did at their second sister *grutch*,' and *Mucedorus*, 1598, II. i. 28–29: 'Thanks to your majesty, his usage shall be such As he thereat shall think no cause to *grutch*.'

GUERDON, *v.t.*, reward, IV. ii. 12

HAPPY TIME, IN, *adv. phrase*, at a lucky moment, II. ii. 21

HEST, *sb.*, command, bidding, I. iii. 36

HIE, *v.r.*, hasten, IV. vii. 310

IMBECILITY, *sb.*, weakness, feebleness, II. iv. 22

IMP, *sb.*, scion, offspring, I. iii. 113

INDUBITATE, *adj.*, undoubted, indisputable, I. i. 42

INNOVATION, *sb.*, change from

good to bad, new misfortune, V. ii. 22

INTEREST, *sb.*, claim, influence, II. iv. 81 ; V. iv. 129

INTIMATE, *v.t.*, intend, IV. iii. 40

LIGHT, *p.p.*, lighted, alighted, II. iv. 104

LIQUID, *adj.*, transparent, insubstantial (used after Latin example as epithet of 'air'), IV. iv. 37

LOVELY, *adj.*, loving, II. iv. 122

MADE ON, *p.p.*, used, treated, IV. ii. 55

MISTRUST, *v.t.*, suspect, II. i. 43

MITHRIDATE, *sb.*, an antidote against poison, V. iii. 59, 65, 81

MOTION, *v.t.*, incline, I. i. 57

MUMFORD (Mountford, the Gallian king's companion). *See* Introduction, p. xxxiv.

NECK-VERSE, *sb.*, originally a Latin verse printed in black letter (usually the beginning of the 51st Psalm) and set before a convict claiming benefit of clergy, by reading which he might 'save his neck' ; here used figuratively for the punishment of hanging itself (*i. e.* the halter), III. v. 51

NICE, *adj.*, coy, demure, I. ii. 9

NIGHTGEAR, *sb*, sleeping attire, II. iv. 40

ONCE, *adv.*, once for all, for good and all, IV. iv. 1

OVERLIVE, *v.t.*, outlive, live beyond due time, III. iii. 43. *See* Note.

OVERPAST, *p.p.*, past, completely disappeared, IV. vii. 309

OWE, *v.t.*, own, V. iv. 127, 128

PALERMO, A RAZOR OF, III. v. 82, a razor of best quality. Cf. *The Wounds of Civil War*, 1594 (Dodsley's Old Plays, VII. p. 190) : 'sharpen the edge-tool of

your wits upon the whetstone of indiscretion, that your words may shine like *the razors of Palermo*.' Again, Nashe's *Have with you to Saffron Walden* (Works, ed. McKerrow, III. p. 9, line 18) : 'girding *thy keene Palermo rasour* to thy side.'

PALMER, *sb.*, wandering pilgrim, who has no fixed abode, II. iv. 107, 110, etc.

PARLOUSEST, *adj.*, most terrible, IV. vii. 302. The word is the superlative of 'parlous,' which, properly a syncopated form of 'perilous,' was in colloquial use for 'clever, extraordinary.' Cf. the modern slang 'awful.' Shakespeare was familiar with this usage. Cf. *Mids. N. Dr.*, III. i, 14, and *Rich. III.*, II. iv. 35

PARTIAL, *adj.*, particular, personal, I. i. 62 ; unduly favourable, III. iii. 24 ; IV. ii. 50

PASSION, *sb.*, sufferings, IV. iv. 10

PATTERN, *sb.*, example, II. iv. 21

PEAT, *sb.*, an ill-tempered woman, constantly found as here with the epithet 'proud,' I. ii. 2. Cf. Ben Jonson's *Every Man out of his Humour* (1599) Dram. Pers. Fallace . . 'a *proud* mincing *peat*'

PELICAN, *sb.*, II. iii. 43. Cf. *Ham.*, IV. v. 143: 'Like the kind life-rendering pelican, Repast them with my blood.' The pelican was supposed to pierce her breast in order to feed her young with her blood.

PERFIT, *adj.*, the original spelling of 'perfect,' which was gradually displaced by the modern form at the end of the 16th century, I. i. 12, 65 ; III. iii. 46 ; IV. i. 30 ; IV. iv. 60 ; IV. vii. 62, 149, 227 ; V. iii. 74

PERILLUS. *See* Introduction.

PHILOMEL, *sb.*, the nightingale, I. iii. 74

PIECE, *sb.*, creature, used

contemptuously, especially of a woman, II. iii. 2

PINE, *v.t.*, cause to pine, IV. i. 18

POST, *adv.*, post haste, speedily, IV. vii. 238

POSTULATE, *v.t.*, demand, II. iv. 102

POULTER, *sb.*, poulterer, III. v. 103

POWDERED, *adj.*, salted, V. iii. 34. Cf. Shakespeare's 1 *Henry IV.*, V. iv. 112: 'If you embowel (*i.e.* disembowel) me to-day, I'll give you leave to *powder* me and eat me to-morrow'; and *The Death of Robert Earl of Huntington* (Dodsley's Old Plays, VIII. 320): 'wine, bread and other *powdered meat*.'

PRESENT, *adj.*, immediate, I. iii. 21

PRESENTLY, *adv.*, immediately, at once, I. iii. 124; III. v. 111

PRETEND, *v.i.*, intend, mean, foreshadow, V. viii. 9

PRICK, *sb.*, I. ii. 17, properly the mark or bull's-eye at which archers aim, and hence the chief prize or profit of the archer. The word is common in the phrase (as here) 'prick and praise,' *i.e.* the chief glory or repute. Cf. *The London Prodigall* (1605), IV. i. 15: 'she had the *prick and praise* for a pretty wench.'

PROSECUTE, *v.i.*, persevere, persist, IV. vii. 199

PURITAN, *sb.*, used contemptuously for hypocrite, V. x. 68. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, II. iii. 132 *seq.*

QUARTER-MASTER, *sb.*, part-ruler, joint-sovereign, III. iv. 13

QUIRKS, *sb.*, humours, caprices, V. iv. 11.

QUONDAM, *adj.*, former, I. i. 31. Cf. Warner's *Albion's England*, Bk. III. ch. xiv., 'the *quondam* king.'

RATHE, *adj.*, early, IV. vii. 2

REDSHANKS, V. vi. 30. *See* Note.

REGIMENT, *sb.*, dominion, II. ii. 38

REGREET, *v.t.*, salute, IV. vii. 308

REQUIRE, *v.t.*, ask, I. iii. 53

RESOLVE, *v.i.*, make up one's mind to expect, III. v. 18

RESPECTIVE, *adj.*, respectful, V. iv. 226

RESTRAINED, *p.p.*, withheld, refused, III. ii. 34

REVENGEMENT, *sb.*, revenge, V. x. 48

SADLY, *adv.*, seriously, II. iv. 39

'SBLOOD, *interj.*, an abbreviation of the oath 'By God's blood,' II. ii. 51; II. iv. 44. Cf. *Swounds.*

SCANT, *adv.*, scarcely, IV. vii. 14

SCUSE, *sb.*, excuse, II. iii. 58

SEA CAP, V. iii. 1. (stage direction), a sailor's cap

SEAGOWN, V. iii. 1. (stage direction), a sailor's tunic, high collared and short sleeved, reaching to the knees (cf. *Hamlet*, V. ii. 13)

SECURELY, *adv.*, without care, without anxiety, I. iii. 10

SEMPSTER, *sb.*, sempstress, II. iv. 45

SERE, *adj.*, dry, withered, IV. iv. 14

SHEEN, *adj.*, bright, brilliant, I. iii. 127. Cf. *Tancred and Gismunda*, 1591 (Dodsley's Old Plays, VII. 58), 'Phoebus's sister *sheen*.'

SHORT, *v.t.*, shorten, I. iii. 92

SIR-REVERENCE *adv. phrase*, asking your pardon; a mock apology, II. iii. 3. A corruption of 'salvâ reverentiâ.' saving your reverence.

SKALLIGER. *See* Introduction.

SKILL, *v.i.*, it skilleth not = it matters not, IV. vii. 245

SORT, *v.i.*, agree, harmonize, I. i. 54

SORT, *sb.*, manner, III. i. 14

SOULDAN, *sb.*, sultan, II. ii. 22

SPED, *p.p.*, favoured, V. iv. 148

SPENDING, *sb.*, expense of living, livelihood, I. iii. 133

STARS, *sb.*, fortunes, III. iv. 2

STATES, *sb.*, estates, III. iv. 6

STILL MARCH. *See* Note on V. viii. (stage direction).

STRATAGEM, *sb.*, deed, IV. iii. 51

SURCEASE, *v.t.*, stop, end, II. iv. 105

'SWOUNDS, *interj.*, a corrupt abbreviation of 'By God's wounds,' II. iv. 7. Cf. *'Sblood.*

TEMPER, *v.t.*, humour, wheedle, III. v. 24

TENDER, *v.t.*, treat with tenderness or consideration, I. i. 15; I. iii. 31

TENOUR, *sb.*, drift, I. iii. 138; IV. iii. 35; the original spelling here is 'tenure.'

TIMELESS, *adj.*, untimely, V. ii. 23

TIREFUL, *adj.*, tiresome, IV. ii. 9

TRIPES, *sb.*, entrails, III. v. 67

TRY, *v.t.*, test, IV. vii. 99, 101, 103, 104

TURN, *sb.*, situation of affairs, IV. iv. 55

UNACQUAINTED, *adj.*, unknown, strange, V. iv. 121

UNPARTIAL, *adj.*, I. i. 39; impartial, unbiassed. Cf. *Locrine*, I. i. 23.

VICE, a blunder for 'advice,' V. vii. 11

VILD, *adj.*, the commonly accepted Elizabethan spelling of 'vile,' III, i. 18, etc.

WAND, *sb.*, whip, in 'riding-wand,' *i.e.* riding-whip, II. ii. 1, 8 (stage direction)

WANTON, *sb.*, a thoughtless child, I. iii. 12

WEED, *sb.*, dress, II. iv. 143

WHENAS, *conj.*, when, II. iv. 101; IV. i. 6

WHEREAS, *conj.*, where, II. iv. 106; IV. iv. 50

WHILOM, *adj.*, the while, II. iv. 101

WILFUL, *adj.*, desirous, IV. vii. 298

WILL, *v.t.*, command, I. iii. 2

WITH, *prep.*, found as affix to some transitive verbs, *e.g.* flatter, I. ii. 77; and mock, II. iv. 78

WORLD TO SEE, *sb.*, wonderful sight; a common colloquialism, IV. v. 1

APPENDIX

THE following is the full text of Warner's story of King Lear as narrated in his *Albion's England*, Bk. III. ch. xiv. (1586), which was clearly very familiar to the old dramatist. (*See* Introduction, p. xxxi.) The spelling is modernized.

About a thirty years and five did Leir rule this land
When, doting on his daughters three, with them he fell in hand
To tell how much they loved him. The eldest did esteem
Her life inferior to her love; so did the second deem.
The youngest said her love was such as did a child behove,
And that how much himself was worth, so much she him did love.
The foremost two did please him well; the youngest did not so;
Upon the prince of Albany the first he did bestow;
The middle on the Cornish prince; their dowry was his throne
At his decease; Cordella's part was very small or none.
Yet for her form and virtuous life a noble Gallian king
Did her, undowed, for his queen into his country bring.
Her sisters, sick of father's health, their husbands by consent
Did join in arms; from Leir so by force the sceptre went;
Yet, for they promise pensions large, he rather was content.

In Albany the quondam king at eldest daughter's court
Was settled scarce, when she repines and lessens still his port.
His second daughter then, he thought, would show herself more kind ;
To whom he, going, for a while did frank allowance find.
Ere long, abridging almost all, she keepeth him so low,
That of two bads, for better's choice, he back again did go.
But Gonorill at his return not only did attempt
Her father's death, but openly did hold him in contempt.
His aged eyes pour out their tears, when holding up his hands,
He said : "O God, whoso thou art, that my good hap withstands,
Prolong not life, defer not death, myself I overlive,
When those, that owe to me their lives, to me my death would give.
Thou town, whose walls rose of my wealth, stand evermore to tell
Thy founder's fall, and warn that none do fall as Leir fell.
Bid none affy in friends, for say, his children wrought his wrack ;
Yea, those that were to him most dear did loathe and let him lack.
Cordella, well Cordella said, she loved me as a child ;
But sweeter words we seek than sooth, and so are men beguiled.
She only rests untried yet ; but what may I expect
From her to whom I nothing gave, when these do me reject ?
Then die, nay try, the rule may fail and Nature may ascend,
Nor are they ever surest friends on whom we most do spend."

He ships himself to Gallia then, but maketh known before
Unto Cordella his estate, who rueth him so poor,
And kept his there arrival close till she provided had
To furnish him in every want. Of him her king was glad,
And nobly entertained him ; the queen, with tears among,
Her duty done, conferreth with her father of his wrong.
Such duty, bounty, kindness and increasing love he found
In that his daughter and her lord, that sorrows more abound
For his unkindly using her, than for the others' crime ;
And kinglike thus in Agamp's court did Leir dwell, till time
The noble king his son-in-law transports an army great
Of forcy Gauls, possessing him of dispossessed seat.
To whom Cordella did succeed, not reigning long in queat.
Not how her nephews war on her and one of them slew t'other
Shall follow ; but I will disclose a most tyrannous mother.

Warner, omitting several generations, proceeds to tell the tale of Iden, the cruel wife of king Gorboduc, and mother of Ferrex and Porrex.

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WITH A NOTE BY

DR. F. J. FURNIVALL

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> "the dram of *eale*
> Doth all the noble substance of a doubt
> To his owne scandle"—*Hamlet*, I. iv. 36.

Scores of emendations for this were proposed till Dr. George MacDonald and I pointed out independently, some twenty years ago, that in the same second quarto in which this *eale* first appeared, the word *devil* also appeared twice in one line, II. ii. 628, as *deale* :—

> "The spirit that I have seene
> May be a *deale*, and the *deale* hath power
> T' assume a pleasing shape"—

so that it was plain that *eale* meant "evil." In Mirk's 15th century *Festial*, lately reprinted by the Early English Text Society, the word is spelt *ele*. See other instances in the Oxford Dictionary. Also the old spelling is a constant reminder that Shakspere's words often had a different meaning to that which we give 'em, so that in *Macbeth* '*scorch'a* the Snake' should not be emended to '*scotcht*'

> "With knyfe *scortche* not the Boorde."—*Babees Book*, 80.

Scores of like instances occur.

[1] I spell "Shakspere," not "Shakespeare," because, in three of his MS. signatures, he so speils it himself. I don't like the printer's conceit of "Shakespeare"; and "shak-forke" was a contemporary spelling of that word. Moreover "Shakspere" tends to remind us that he and his fellows pronounced his name "Shahk-spare," with the *a* of Father, *ah* in "*Shak*," and the French *e*, our *a*, in "*spare*."

Again, in the history of our pronunciation, old spelling is invaluable. Phoneticians assure us that in Shakspere's time our long *i* was pronounced like *ee* or *ea*, so that *wine* was *ween* or *wean*. You test this by the First Quartos and Folio of Shakspere's plays, and you find that our *Ay*, *Aye*, was almost always printed *I*,[1] and this makes you suggest that the phonetic men should re-examine their theory.

No man of scholarly instincts can deny that Elizabethan works should be studied in their Elizabethan form, or as near thereto as the printers of James I.'s time enable us to get at it.

Successive facsimiles of the First Folio, and others of the Quartos, have been produced to give material to students for their work; but, as every user of these facsimiles knows, the mistakes in the text of them prevent their being used as companions for constant reading of the plays. You come on blunders which force you to refer to a modern edited text for correction.

Hitherto, no Old-Spelling Shakspere has been edited for everyday use. We began one in the New Shakspere Society some twenty years ago, but I unluckily kept back the twenty-six plays which my friend Walter Stone and I edited, in the hope of getting the Introductions that I wanted to them, specially on the development of Shakspere's metre, but which have never turned up, and which I cannot now produce. These Plays will forthwith be issued by Chatto and Windus with short Forewords by me—in addition to others by Walter Stone to the *Shrew* and the later *Histories;*—and the rest of the Dramas, as well as the Poems, I shall edit. Whichever original, Quarto or Folio, has the best text, is taken as the basis of the play, and all changes in it are shown by blacker type, so that every reader has warning at once of what is emendation and what is Shakspere. Alterd Roman type words are printed in *Clarendon*, and italics are in *Sans-serif* (without tags at head and foot). Thus, lines 192–3 of *Loues Labor's Lost*, II. i. appear as:—

DUMAINE *comes forward.*

Dum. [*to* **BOYET**] Sir, I pray you a word! What **L**adie is that
fame? [*Points to* **KATHERIN**.
Boyet. The heire of *Alanſon;* **Katherin** her name. 193

1 "What? verses? *Nath.* I, sir." . . . "Was this directed to you?" *Iaq.* "I, sir."—*Loues Labor's Lost*, IV. ii. 93–4, 118, 119.

193. *Katherin*] Singer (Capell conj.). Rosalin Q, F.

So you at once see that the words "comes forward," "to Boyet," "Points to Katherin," "Katherin," are editor's work, not Shakspere's or his printer's, while the note shows you what the Quarto and Folio wrong reading is.

When a Quarto word is corrected by a Folio one, it is markt by an asterisk, dagger, or other sign, as in *Loues Labor's Lost*, II. i. 88:—

"To let you enter his vnpeopled* houſe."

The Notes will be as few as possible, and the Forewords short.

In those plays in which one or more other writers are suspected, as in *Titus Andronicus*, *I Henry VI.*, *Timon*, *Pericles*, etc., the part thought spurious will be printed in smaller type, not with any view of dictating to students of the text, but to insure their careful consideration of the editor's suggestion. If their conclusion is that the editor is wrong, and the small-type passages genuine, he will be content with having raised the points.

The plan of this edition is not a matter of whim. The book is what the Editor, as an earnest student of Shakspere, long wanted for himself, and believd other students would want, that is, a working edition in the spelling of the 16th or early 17th century, with as little change of word as possible,—only that made necessary by careful criticism,—and with all such changes plainly markt by change of type, so that continual references to footnotes would not be needed. He also wisht that the portions of plays supposed to be due to other men should be in other type, so that in reading them, he might continually be prest to ask himself, "Do I recognize Shakspere's hand here, or do I not?"

This edition will, for the first time, restore to Shakspere's text of *Richard II.* about a score of his lines in the Quartos hitherto left unused; and it will separate, in *Loues Labor's Lost*, the fine revised speech of Berowne in Act IV. sc. iii., which former editors have declared themselves unable to part, from its first cast in the Quarto and Folio which mixt them both together.

18th *August*, 1907. F. J. Furnivall.

My friend Dr. Mark H. Liddell, of Lexington, Mass., U.S.A., has just printed with his own hands an 8vo Old-Spelling edition of *Othello*, with full notes. He formerly issued 4to Old-Spelling editions of *The Tempest* and *Macbeth*.

*88. *vnpeopled*] F. vnpeeled Q.

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The chronicle history of King Leir

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